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THE SUPREME COURT of the United States, in a striking decision, has at last pushed open for Tom Mooney the door that was slammed shut upon him eighteen years ago with all the force that perjury and collusion could muster in the hysterical, red-baiting state of California. The case has been sent back to the California Supreme Court, to be sure, but it is made clear that if Mooney cannot get relief there he may appeal to Washington with a fair certainty of a complete review; and the court administered a severe rebuke to California for its preposterous contention that its courts do not have the power to reopen cases in which intrinsic fraud is alleged:

Without attempting at this time to deal with the question at length, we deem it sufficient for the present to say that we are unable to approve this narrow view. . . .

The court then goes on in effect to instruct the Supreme Court of California as to its duties under the Constitution:

No decision of the Supreme Court of California has been brought to our attention holding that the state court is without power to issue this historic remedial process when it appears that one is deprived of his liberty without due process of law in violation of the Constitution. . . . Upon the state courts, equally with the courts of the Union, rests the obligation to guard and enforce every right secured by that Constitution.

These are stirring words. It is difficult to see how the Supreme Court of California can resist their logic or their appeal to reason. Meanwhile the Governor of California could well afford to order the immediate and unconditional release of Tom Mooney. It would save the expense of another hearing, and it would do more than any other single gesture to rehabilitate California's reputation for justice.

THAT MOST USEFUL SENATOR, Edward P. Costigan, of Colorado, has again introduced an anti-lynching bill in the Senate in conjunction with Senator Wagner of New York, who cooperated with him on a similar bill which was favorably reported by the Senate Judiciary Committee at the last session of Congress. Though there has been a decrease in the number of lynchings, the necessity for this measure is greater than ever because of the failure of the Department of Justice to move in the case of Claude Neal, who was lynched on October 26 last at Marianna, Florida. The circumstances of this crime were revolting beyond words. The lynching was planned and advertised in advance and was accompanied by every form of torture and mutilation that a brutal and sadistic mob could invent, including the searing of the man from head to toe with red-hot irons. When he was finally killed—after hours of torture—his remains were hung up and viewed by a crowd variously estimated at between 3,000 and 7,000 people. Now it happened that this Negro was seized in Georgia and carried into Florida, but the Attorney General of the United States has not acted—for reasons which doubtless seem sufficient to him. It is clear that we need a law which will compel the government of the United States to move in every lynching case; if it did so with the enthusiasm with which it is going after gangsters and bank robbers, it would speedily reduce lynchings to a minimum. Such fiendish atrocities as those at Marianna do the good name of the country vastly more harm than a Dillinger or a Floyd.

ALL FRIENDS OF PEACE will rejoice that the munitions investigation is to continue. The first \$50,000 needed for this year's work was voted without difficulty and Senator Nye did not press for the second \$50,000 on being assured that he would get it when needed. Investigation will go into shipbuilding, steel, chemicals, and banking, with promise that the revelations will continue to indict the profiteers and illumine the dire need for nationalizing the munitions industry. The success of the committee in maintaining public interest despite the vast volume of material unearthed redounds to the credit of Stephen Raushenbush, chief investigator. He has been a thorn to the manufacturers, and at one time was to be attacked by the underhand method of a pamphlet on his matrimonial affairs. The pamphlet actually was written but was never circulated, probably because news about it was published in good time, which drove leading manufacturers to be quick in denying they had any part in it. His work of investigation has been done with so much modesty that it is well to point out that

the committee has relied on him for a considerable measure of its own success, a statement which does not in any way minimize our admiration for the signal ability with which Senators Nye, Clark, and Bone, in particular, have used the material and conducted the inquiry.

SENATOR NYE and his colleagues now find themselves in something of a dilemma. They are being pressed to bring in an early report with precise recommendations. This is by their friends, who want them to cash in on the present public interest, which experience suggests cannot be kept too long at high pitch. It is also by those who are interested in defeating the main purpose of the investigation, who know that hasty action is likely to be superficial. We hope the committee, even if public interest is not kept at fever heat, will not do anything to jeopardize its fundamental program, which in our opinion should have two parts. One should lead to a drastic revision of our defense policy, now conceived in terms of raising and equipping an army of 4,000,000 for service overseas as in the World War. The other should be the nationalization of the munitions industry. Not until we have a really defensive defense policy, with army and navy only large enough to protect our territory, will a nationalized munitions industry be practicable. But until the industry is nationalized it may not be possible to revise the defense policy, since our munitions profiteers are not going to let the country decide defense matters on their merits if they can avoid it. The first step may have to be nationalization as a means of reaching the second.

HIROTA'S annual speech before the Diet affords slight comfort to those who had hoped for the emergence of a more liberal policy in Japan. While in tone it is friendly enough to foreign nations, it is nevertheless firm in its reiteration of Japan's "special position" in Eastern Asia. Particularly disquieting are Hirota's reference to the "growing trend among the Chinese people to appreciate the true motives of Japan" and his expressed hope that they will "undertake to meet the genuine aspirations of our country." These words carry especial significance in view of the fact that Nanking has apparently just acquiesced in the surrender of Chahar which the Japanese are seeking to annex to Manchoukuo is of no great economic importance, it would be of high strategic value in the event of a war with the Soviet Union, as it would furnish a base for a flanking movement against the Trans-Siberian Railway. It is significant, moreover, that Hirota follows his remarks regarding difficulties with the Soviet Union with a reference to Chiang Kai-shek's campaign against the Communists, in which he laments the fact that the Chinese Soviets appear to be consolidating their position in Kweichow and Szechuan. Taken as a whole the speech is neither provocative nor particularly alarming, but it serves as a warning that Japan is unlikely to be swerved from its fundamental objectives.

EVENTS RATHER THAN DESIRES have forced Prime Minister Bennett of Canada to agree to negotiate a reciprocity treaty with the United States at the same time that the British are preparing a festive effort to consolidate the empire. This is the jubilee year of King George's accession, and the upwelling of loyal sentiment throughout

the dominions, London hoped, would make it easy to widen and strengthen the economic ties of the Ottawa agreement. That agreement, it will be recalled, brought Canada somewhat out of the American constellation and drew her more into the British economic field. It was effected largely at the cost of trade with the United States. American exports to Canada have dropped two-thirds since 1929, and imports are down nearly three-fifths. Mr. Bennett's Opposition has been working up strong feelings in favor of its traditional policy of reciprocity with us, and now he must try to steal as much of the liberal program to avert if possible his own defeat next year. So within the Anglo-Saxon clan comes a curious strain—the British trying to draw Canada into their branch of the family while we are trying to lure it into ours. The outcome may not be clean cut, but it might mean the end of the narrow conception of imperial free trade, hence of a self-contained empire.

THE PRACTICABILITY of international planning is illustrated once again by the shipping agreement just concluded at London. A tentative scheme has been drawn up, subject to approval by the various governments, whereby all ships in commission would contribute to an international fund for the retirement or compensation of serviceable vessels for which there is no employment. While the fact that any agreement could be reached in an enterprise so strongly affected by nationalist feeling is encouraging, the shortcomings of the proposal should serve as a warning to those who look upon planning as a panacea for all present-day economic difficulties. Largely because of American opposition, nothing is to be done to restrict the prevailing system of subsidies. What we have in effect, then, is a scheme by which American taxpayers not only subsidize their own uneconomic vessels, but pay foreign ships to stay off the seas. Of course some American ships will also doubtless be retired, but that merely means that the taxpayer pays both ways—first to construct a vessel that never should have been built, and then to retire the ship to make way for another. This may be flattering to our national ego, but it is bad politics and worse economics.

A NEW pure-food-and-drug bill substantially weaker than the original Tugwell measure has just been introduced by Senator Copeland. This time Senator Copeland has been so zealous in the protection of the manufacturer that his bill omits the existing legal requirements—in effect since 1907—that labels of drugs shall disclose the presence of alcohol, chloroform, or the dangerous sedative acetanilid, to say nothing of the newer coal-tar sedatives and the cumulative poisons like arsenic, mercury, and strychnine. Another conspicuous weakness of the bill is its failure to require complete formulary disclosure on labels, to provide for licensing medicine manufacturers, or to ban outright the sale of drugs for those diseases in which self-medication is dangerous. The proposed measure follows closely the second Copeland bill introduced last year. It makes illegal the adulteration and misbranding of food, drugs, and cosmetics, prohibits false or misleading advertising, and provides for two important committees to prescribe regulations for the act. The Committee on Public Health, to be composed of five disinterested experts appointed by the President, is empowered to designate dangerous adulterants or

narcotics and to impose safe tolerances for their use, to require precaution on labels against unsafe dosage or use by children, to regulate the licensing of food manufacturers or packers whose product may be contaminated by bacteria, and to designate diseases for which drugs may not be advertised as having therapeutic claims. A Committee on Food Standards, with the food industry given minority representation, is similarly empowered to fix standards of identity and quality for food. The bill, of course, represents a tremendous improvement over existing legislation, but it is not much stronger than the one introduced last year by Senator McCarran at the request of the food and drug industries. We see no reason why the consumer should be entitled only to that protection which trade interests are willing to give.

IF WE WERE MARXISTS, we should be inclined to say that by taking the President's security measure out of the hands of the House Labor Committee, where it normally belongs, and referring it to the Ways and Means Committee, Administration leaders have revealed the class character of that measure. Headed by Representative Connerly, of Massachusetts, A. F. of L. spokesman, the Labor Committee is alleged, whether justifiably or not, to have a somewhat pro-labor bias, a charge that has never been leveled against the Ways and Means Committee. Not being Marxists, we shall merely call the action of the Administration machine a despicable maneuver, praise the members of the Labor Committee for their courage in filing a unanimous protest, and trust that they will go through with their announced intention of holding hearings on the Lundeen bill. It is interesting to note in passing that this was another of those items which the *New York Times* does not consider "fit to print."

WALTER LIPPMANN, whose ability to carry water on both shoulders has been phenomenal, seems to be getting tired. In his speech before the National Association of Book Publishers he took his stand resolutely on the right. Publishers, said Mr. Lippmann, should not accept codes, because codes constitute a threat to the freedom of the press. Not even Elisha Hanson has suggested that building regulations might be used to interfere with the freedom of the press. But Mr. Lippmann has the courage of his prose style and he hesitated not at all to draw a horrendous picture of a progressive publisher being forced out of business by a censor disguised as a building inspector, an architect, or a labor board trying to get higher wages for newspapermen. Incidentally he paid tribute to the principle of lower wages, which has lately come to be one of his minor theme songs. On January 19 he approved the President's proposals for unemployment insurance not because they were generous but because they were niggardly.

This American system [of unemployment insurance] is devised . . . to discourage rigid wage rates and to encourage reemployment. It discourages rigidity because the unemployed worker, after his insurance is exhausted, will be offered work that is distinctly less attractive than the work he might obtain elsewhere by accepting a private wage. It encourages reemployment, in part, because public works stimulate private business but chiefly because wages must come down when prices fall if men are to be employed.

A few days earlier, in a lyrical outburst in praise of what he called The New Deal of Today, Mr. Lippmann said:

Since the balancing of the budget is made dependent upon the revival of business, it becomes the duty of the government to reject policies which obstruct revival . . . This involves a refusal to raise the cost of production before profits are earned, and therefore a refusal to encourage monopolistic prices, monopolistic wages . . . It involves the abandonment of merely punitive and terroristic attacks on private business.

It was in this same article that Mr. Lippmann furnished final proof that even a man with a prose style cannot carry water on both shoulders indefinitely without getting all wet. Of the President's new program he said:

[It] has been applauded as radical by all but those who had hoped that the New Deal was seriously proposing to establish a planned socialist economy. It is radical . . . On the other hand, the new program has been applauded as conservative except by those who distrust all public enterprise and prefer to rely upon a struggle for survival. It is conservative . . .

The World Court

ADHERENCE to the World Court has never been a policy we could support with unqualified approval, though we prefer it to non-adherence without much hesitation. The objections to it are not, we admit, of a purely isolationist character. The court is an imperfect institution, with the shortcomings to be expected of a modest departure into a new international venture. Our adherence will not greatly strengthen the court at the outset, any more than our non-adherence has greatly weakened it. It will remain for a long time a judicial body which in minor matters will function as a court of law and on issues of major political importance will vote along political lines. What many Americans easily assume is that the World Court in international affairs is even more supreme than our own Supreme Court in interstate affairs. But this is far from being true. Our Supreme Court is an integral part of a federal system of government, built upon the limitation of state sovereignty. But there is no corresponding world state or federation, nor even the prospect of one. National sovereignty remains the uncontested principle in all international relations. Most of the American hesitation about adherence to the court has been due not to the objections advanced by those trying to draft reservations protecting our sovereignty, but to the fear of a system of world law in which we somehow lose control over our own affairs. The reservations laid down by the Senate protect us fully, but even with them many persons are timid of stepping out of isolation and cooperating in any way with far-away and suspect countries.

Europeans have been taken aback by our prolonged weighing of scruples. It appeared to Europe that we were holding back from a worthy and essential start on a new technique of international dealing, and giving quite inappropriate reasons for it. The real function of the court, beyond strengthening the fabric of international law, is to provide a way of settling a limited range of international disputes. Obviously the chief task of the present generation, the first in history to turn so passionately against war, is to find an effective alternative to it. Arbitration, con-

ciliation, the outlawry of war, the League, the World Court, the Optional Clause, all are attempts to create machinery which nations will use to settle conflicts without impairing their sovereignty, and yet without resort to force. The efforts have been vitiated in large measure, because they ran parallel to the determination to punish Germany through the Treaty of Versailles, convert the League into an agency for enforcing that treaty, and through the League make certain that all future wars must be League wars, hence world wars. The years since 1919 have been rich in fruitful disappointments in these contradictory efforts. The League abjectly deflated itself as an agency to impose peace in the Manchurian crisis. The rise of Hitler bitterly rebuked Europe for trying to carry out punitive repression in a peace treaty. The first major issue before the World Court, following the Silesian plebiscite, brought a straight political vote by European judges against Germany, and showed how far sovereign states still remain from voluntarily accepting the application of abstract justice. But the years have not been all lost. Indeed, these setbacks have brought us much closer to realities, and have taught the first lesson of all—what not to expect. At the same time the peace machinery of the League has settled some minor but dangerous conflicts, and the World Court, though not put to another major test, has worked well in ruling on lesser differences. The habit of using the court has begun, and without the slow establishment of the habit, there can be no development of a genuine system of international justice.

Where Is Security, Mr. Roosevelt?

WHEN the President declared in his message to Congress last June that the primary objective of the Administration's policy was "the security of the men, women, and children of the nation," he was voicing the fundamental desire of millions of American citizens. Ten to twelve million unemployed with their families, three to four million indigent people, and a countless number of men and women dependent because of illness, child-bearing, or other circumstances were promised that the resources of this great country would be mobilized to banish forever from their lives the terror of insecurity and undeserved pauperism. On January 17 the Administration's specific program for carrying out this promise was laid before Congress. Even as it stands it represents a historic advance in the whole social outlook in this country. For this the President personally deserves credit, however much we are astonished that he did not support his own experts, who wanted to start with a national system of social insurance.

In essentials the unemployment-insurance plan provided in the new Wagner bill represents little, if any, advance over that in the old Wagner-Lewis bill. A federal tax is to be levied on payrolls, beginning with 1 per cent in 1936 and reaching 3 per cent in 1938, to encourage the states to adopt unemployment-insurance legislation. States must make all contributions compulsory, but are free to determine whether or not employees shall contribute and what shall be the length of the waiting period and the amount of benefits to

be paid. No recommendation is made regarding the crucial question of whether the states should adopt the company-reserves scheme now in force in Wisconsin, or whether all reserves should be pooled as in the so-called Ohio Plan. No minimum benefit is established, but the Committee on Economic Security recommends half wages with a maximum of \$15 a week for a period of from fifteen to twenty-five weeks.

Provision for the care of needy persons over sixty-five years of age is also to be left to the states, except that the federal government would appropriate not more than \$50,000,000 to supplement state funds, an appropriation which may rise to \$125,000,000 in succeeding years. As in the case of unemployment insurance, no minimum benefit is stipulated, but the maximum is set at \$30 a month for persons who can qualify under a means test. Individual states can, if they so desire, increase this maximum, but the chances are that many will fall short of even this level. In addition, the plan calls for a compulsory old-age-insurance scheme, to be financed by a tax on both employers and employees, which will not begin payments until 1942. This is to be supplemented by a voluntary system of old-age annuities to be sold by the government to low-income groups not included in the compulsory plan. The bill also provides for small appropriations for mothers' assistance, maternal and child welfare, and public health—the total cost to be no greater than \$48,000,000 a year.

From this brief summary it is evident that the defects in the President's program are not matters of detail but of fundamental principle. To refer to the Wagner bill as a plan for social security when it makes no provision for the millions now unemployed is, to our mind, presumptuous. To be sure, the Administration is planning to enroll 3,500,000 men in a gigantic government-works scheme which is to be launched soon. But even allowing for indirect employment under this project, there will remain at least four million adults for whom no national provision is being made. Moreover, to establish forty-eight different systems of unemployment insurance is a violation of all sound actuarial principles. If unemployment is to be conceived of as an insurable hazard—as the President's plan assumes it to be—it is desirable to spread the risk as widely as possible rather than to confine operation of the scheme within plant or state boundaries. In lieu of rigid federal standards, we can be certain, furthermore, that many of the states will adopt legislation even less adequate than that suggested by the President's committee. Some day, perhaps, we shall learn why the Administration, against the recommendation of many of its technical advisers, sidetracked the proposal for a national insurance scheme, based on the established principle of grant-in-aid, for the cumbersome federal-state plan.

Finally there is the crass assumption that half pay or less for from fifteen to twenty-five weeks—providing the reserves have not previously been exhausted—can afford any genuine protection against the hazard of unemployment. In a survey made in Buffalo in November, 1933, it was found that 71 per cent of the unemployed had been without work for more than forty weeks and 60 per cent had been jobless for over a year. The old-age pensions are likewise so niggardly as to be of little value. If each dollar of the \$50,000,000 to be appropriated by the federal government is matched by similar contributions from the states, a total of \$100,000,000 will be available for distribution among

6,500,000 persons, at least two-thirds of whom are without means of self-support. In later years this fund is expected to rise to \$250,000,000—but even that amount will provide less than \$100 a year apiece for the needy aged.

While the editors of *The Nation* are conscious of the necessity of immediate action in the field of social insurance, they believe that it would be a mistake to commit the country to a long-time program as cumbersome as the present one. On this we agree fully with the experts of the Committee on Economic Security, who maintain that any national scheme, no matter how inadequate, would be preferable to the Wagner-Lewis formula, since it would more easily lend itself to amendment and liberalization. We would go farther and question whether genuine protection against the hazard of unemployment can be placed on an actuarial basis. In those countries where actuarial schemes have been tried, experience has shown that they either have to be abandoned or transformed into direct relief measures when a crisis becomes really severe. The actuarial approach conceives of wealth as being stored up to meet future contingencies. This is economically unsound. The goods and services which we consume must obviously be derived from current production. Thus protection against the hazards of modern life must be based on a redistribution of existing resources rather than on an accumulation for future catastrophes.

The Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance bill, introduced into Congress by Representative Lundeen, dramatizes some of the fundamental principles of social security. It is loosely drafted and must be reworked before it is ready for legislative consideration, but it has served in its present form as a rallying-point for working-class support. With its basic principles we would differ at one point. The bill provides "compensation . . . equal to average local wages" to all workers and farmers unemployed through no fault of their own. A more satisfactory criterion would be that of an adequate living standard, irrespective of prevailing wages. Such a standard not only would be more equitable but would have the advantage of simplicity in operation, and should have a salutary effect on wages. In practice, it should necessitate benefits at least as large as the minimum of \$10 per week, plus \$3 for each dependent, specified in the bill, varying slightly with the locality.

In commending the Lundeen plan we realize that we are laying ourselves open to the charge that we are seeking to wreck the capitalist system. To this we would reply that we have no interest in preserving any system which cannot give security to the American people. But on the basis of careful computation, we find no justification for the charge that this bill would impose an intolerable burden on the national economy. The experience of this country between 1917 and 1919 shows rather conclusively that it is possible for the whole population to attain a relatively high standard of living if the resources of the country are utilized to the utmost. And we know of no means better calculated to stimulate the fullest use of these resources than a measure which would provide the underprivileged groups of the country with sufficient purchasing power to guarantee them a decent living. All of this is not to imply that security can be bought cheaply, but rather that true security would cost and be worth vastly more than any sum envisioned in Mr. Roosevelt's miserly program.

The Casa Is Fascist

ABOUT three months ago *The Nation* published an article charging—and giving evidence to prove the charge—that the Italian Department and the Casa Italiana at Columbia University were controlled by active fascists, that the Casa was a center of fascist propaganda in the United States, and that free discussion was prohibited within its walls. A letter of denial from President Butler was printed in *The Nation* on November 14. It was evasive and general and ignored most of our charges, but it contained a few positive statements. Dr. Butler could not claim that anti-fascist scholars or publicists had ever spoken at the Casa but he did assert that the famous historian, Guglielmo Ferrero, "was invited by the director of the Casa Italiana in person to speak at the Casa, but was compelled to decline to do so." A week later *The Nation* published a letter of similar reproof and denial from the officers of the Graduate Club in Italian Studies at Columbia, in which it was suggested that it might "be of interest to know that it is part of our program for this year to invite Professor Gaetano Salvemini to speak on some phase of contemporary Italian history (and this not as an afterthought). . . ." This was of interest, since Professor Salvemini of Harvard is certainly the most distinguished anti-fascist Italian scholar in the United States and had not even been mentioned in President Butler's careful defense.

The assertions by President Butler and the Graduate Club have until now constituted the only important objections to the general indictment brought by *The Nation* which have remained unanswered. In this issue they are answered. We call our readers' attention to the exchange of letters between Professor Salvemini and the Graduate Club in Italian Studies on page 129 of this issue, and the letter to *The Nation* from Dr. Ferrero on the next page. Their effect on the small remaining fragments of the defense is like that of a sharp pin on a soap bubble. Dr. Ferrero was never invited to lecture at the Casa Italiana and, therefore, was not "compelled to decline." The hopeful defense put up by the officers of the Graduate Club has similarly collapsed. Professor Prezzolini, put to the test, flatly refused to be a party to an invitation to Professor Salvemini to speak at the Casa. The students were evidently taken aback by this refusal. They had somehow cherished a belief that the Casa would welcome even an anti-fascist scholar of Dr. Salvemini's distinction. When the truth was forced upon them by Prezzolini, they acted with courage; they withdrew from the Casa and then, as an independent organization, renewed their invitation.

These letters do more than buttress *The Nation's* indictment of the Casa. They place the president of the university in an uncomfortable spot that was certainly not of his choosing. Dr. Butler is, or likes to think of himself as, a liberal. In his recent Annual Report to the Trustees, he earnestly reaffirmed his condemnation of fascism and his respect for *Lehrfreiheit*. But in the same report he praised "the vigorous scholarly activities of the Casa Italiana." How does President Butler manage glibly and with apparent sincerity to reconcile his opposition to fascism with the existence of out-and-out fascism under the roof of his own uni-

versity? The answer is not as hard as it looks. Naturally Dr. Butler wants to believe that his Italian Department and its magnificent Casa are instruments of free scholarship. And naturally, when they are attacked, he turns to their chiefs for information and reassurance. The "facts" in his letter to *The Nation* were supplied to Dr. Butler by Professors Bigongiari and Prezzolini, heads, respectively, of the department and the Casa. They doubtless composed the best defense they could; it is unfortunate for Dr. Butler that it was so frail. But it apparently served his immediate needs, and he was able to go on believing in the academic integrity of an important segment of the university. The integrity he leans upon has turned out to be a weak reed. Sooner or later Dr. Butler is going to discover that the first loyalty of the men he relied upon is not to the university that houses them. Dino Bigongiari and Giuseppe Prezzolini are Italian citizens. Bigongiari is openly a member of the Fascist Party. Prezzolini has not acknowledged membership, but it is reliably reported. Both men owe duties to Mussolini that precede and override those to Columbia or its president. That these are not merely general or sentimental duties is indicated by the following regulation which appears in an official circular issued by the Italian Ministry of Education in August, 1934, for the instruction of Italian professors who lecture in foreign countries:

When, moreover, professors intend to go abroad to lecture or to take part in events or conventions of a cultural character, the Ministry must be informed, if possible, at least two months before the date fixed for departure, *so that measures may be taken, in concert with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for the guidance of our authorized diplomatic representatives concerning the proper propaganda to be carried on in the interest of our culture [italics ours].*

What has happened, then, is obvious. The fascist professors at Columbia are obligated to the double duty of representing the Italian government and at the same time preserving a necessary appearance of impartial scholarship. But under examination and in the face of challenge their essential bias becomes clear.

Now that the facts are all known, what action will the Columbia authorities take? Will President Butler continue to hide behind the screen of official silence that has surrounded him since he dispatched his ill-fated letter to *The Nation*? And what will be the function of the Casa now that the only important student organization has withdrawn in protest against its policy? Can it justify its continued existence (not to mention a deficit amounting to one-fourth the deficit of the entire university) by serving as a lodging-house for visiting fascist officials and housing a few graduate courses? The Casa stands as a pretentious monument to the spirit of dictatorship which Dr. Butler so solemnly deplors.

There is only one honorable way out for the university. That is to make a clear break with fascist control; to let Professor Prezzolini and Professor Bigongiari go home and serve their party on their native soil, where the universities make no pretense of permitting free discussion or supporting disinterested learning; and then to appoint as head of the Italian Department at Columbia and as head of the Casa scholars who are not obliged to carry on "proper propaganda" in the interest of fascist "culture."

Sticky Business

BALLYHOO has been such a howling success in this country that it has all but broken down the power to recognize it, as well as any scruples against using it even to corrupt public opinion and private conscience. It finds its way into the most respectable newspapers and magazines, often over the names of our best-known molders of thought, reaching its highest point when these molders of thought do their molding at so much a word which they themselves do not write—for, aside from the willing press agent who can turn out copy to anybody's style, "ghosts" now advertise their shadowy services in the best papers. But Americans are still shocked when money passes hands; and even hard-boiled realists have a right to be stirred by the disclosure, based on conclusive proof which *The Nation* possesses, that the recent thrilling flight of Amelia Earhart was merely the most spectacular of several projects in ballyhoo designed and paid for by the Pan-Pacific Press Bureau to increase the profits of Hawaiian sugar planters.

We are more than willing to believe that Miss Earhart, whose passion for flying is perhaps matched only by her desire to demonstrate that women are the equals of men in the air or out of it, would rather fly the Pacific than have \$10,000 if the choice were necessary. The fact remains that she was privately paid that amount, not to fly the Pacific but to fly the Pacific and then, against the shining background of that magnificent achievement, parrot a puny phrase to the effect that Hawaii was part of the United States. Such transactions are generally regarded as corrupt, even though her best friend—presumably her husband, who arranged the terms—neglected to tell her so. In this instance it appears that Miss Earhart, used to more rarefied air, was not the equal of the gentlemen with their feet on the ground who traded upon her interest in aviation to promote their private fliers in sugar, publicity, and plain cash.

This is not to imply, either, that Miss Earhart should not have had \$10,000 for risking her life to cross an ocean for the first time. As a prize, \$10,000 would have been little enough. As a secret payment for propaganda services rendered, it was \$10,000 too much. "It helped my peace of mind to know that I was obligated to do nothing at all beyond the fulfilment of an ambition Mr. Putnam and I have long cherished—to visit the alluring southwest corner of the United States that is Hawaii." So read the tail end of Miss Earhart's own story in the *New York Times* of January 13. Since then she has received the congratulations of the nation's congratulators from the President down, she has been proposed for a Congressional medal, and her stock as "an example to the youth of America" has undoubtedly risen to a new high. It is this which really distresses us. The youth of America have been put upon quite enough already. They have seen one great example after another bite the dust in the past few years. Miss Earhart might have spared the y. o. A. the disillusionment of finding that the pot of gold at the end of her rainbow flight from Hawaii to California was badly tarnished. We suspect that our foremost woman flier has at least learned one of the facts of life; and that in future she will keep her wings free of sugar of whatever sort.

Issues and Men

Walking Through Race Prejudice

A SIMPLE news item in the New York dailies the other day gave me a real thrill. It read as follows: "Twenty-nine sergeants today were promoted to lieutenants by Police Commissioner Lewis J. Valentine. Among them was Samuel J. Battle, a Negro, the first of his race to rise above the rank of patrolman." It took my mind back a long time, to the days of the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the demand of some of us who were associated in that undertaking that Negroes be appointed to the police force of New York City. Of course we were looked upon as crazy people. It had never been done and it couldn't be done. You could not mix the two races. Had we forgotten that policemen sleep and at times eat in police stations, and that you could not expect white policemen to associate in that way with colored men? Policing the city was a white man's privilege, and while you might find a colored man who had the physical courage necessary for the job, you could not find one with the brains and the judgment necessary in some of the dangerous situations which arise in a policeman's life, and of course it was inconceivable that a colored man should have the right to give orders to white men. Vainly we pointed out that the men best fitted to deal with Negroes were men of their own race; that as Italian detectives were put on the force to deal with Italian criminals and Russians to deal with Russians, so colored police would not only understand colored people better, but actually get greater obedience and cooperation from them than would white.

Well, time passed. Negroes took the civil-service examination for patrolmen but were usually found ineligible or skipped on the list for promotion. Finally one man, Samuel J. Battle, came along who stood so high in his examinations that it was impossible to pass him over, and besides there was a police commissioner in office who was willing that the experiment should be tried. He was appointed and assigned to a station house—and went through hell. He did encounter race prejudice—lots of it. Had he been a colored cadet at West Point he could not have been tried more severely. Whether he was inspired by the fact that he was a pioneer for his race or not, he stuck it out and won the respect and regard of the men who had started out by yielding to senseless prejudice without stopping to reason about it. Today there are no less than 125 Negroes in the Police Department doing entirely satisfactory work. Battle was the first to be promoted to sergeant, but another Negro, Dr. Louis T. Wright, has been for years a police surgeon, having the rank now of inspector. The white policemen are very happy to have his services. He was the second Negro medical man to be elected to the College of Surgeons; at a dinner given to him in recognition of this the chief surgeon of the Police Department testified in highest terms to Dr. Wright's worth as a physician and a man. But, of course, it couldn't be done—before it was attempted. Oil and water wouldn't mix, and white men would never submit to close association with Negroes or to examination by a colored physician.

In the Fire Department of New York City the captain of Engine Company 55 is Wesley Williams. He, too, is a colored man—no doubt about that—and he is today commanding the very same company which he joined years ago as a lowest-grade fireman. He, too, was told that he could not last, that he wouldn't be allowed to sleep in the dormitory with the white men. He attended strictly to his business; he took with a smile the tricks played upon him in the hope of shaking his nerve and getting him to resign; he worked his way up steadily through every grade, serving always with this same company which he now commands. The white men under him who know his worth are happy to serve under him, and the Fire Commissioner went out of his way, when Wesley Williams was promoted, to call attention to the fact that he was the first colored man to reach this rank, and that he was considered one of the ablest officers in the department. It couldn't be done!

All this reminds me of the old Eastern fable of the traveler who came to a narrow defile and found his way blocked by an obstacle. He tried to surmount it and could not. He tried to go around either side and failed. He tried to go under it, but that was impossible. Finally, after much delay and doubt—he walked right through it and found that it wasn't an obstacle after all. So it is with many manifestations of race prejudice. Years ago in New York City the Cosmopolitan Club gave a dinner to which some of us were invited to discuss the lot of the Negro in New York. Of course some Negroes were asked. How could we discuss the Negro problem adequately without getting their point of view? A drunken Hearst reporter attended and the next day there were tremendous headlines. Leering, vicious-looking Negroes were portrayed by staff artists as sitting next to white women; and the whole undertaking was pictured as a move for miscegenation. The Associated Press sent the story all over the country, with the result that those of us whose names were mentioned, both men and women, received letters of abuse and obscenity from half the states in the Union, and the good old New York *Times*, true to its Southern ownership, solemnly warned us that we were countenancing something that must never be in America.

Well, a couple of years ago I attended a dinner here in a leading hotel in honor of a British lieutenant general, given by a group of entirely conservative persons interested in Southern education. Half the people in the room were Negroes and half whites, but this fact was never referred to in the accounts of the dinner. White people and colored people frequent the same night clubs and restaurants in Harlem, there is free and open association between literary men and women and artists of both races, yet the Republic still stands, the heavens have not fallen, and in its own opinion the Anglo-Saxon race is as sacredly virile as ever.

Bruce Garrison Villard

A Cartoon by LOW



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WANTED A SHOT-GUN.

A Flier in Sugar

By LESLIE FORD

THE ways of the power trust with professors, "experts," and journalists have been so thoroughly exposed during the past few years that an article or interview extolling the benefits of private ownership in this field is no more convincing to the intelligent reader than is a Vanderbilt or Cabot testimonial for a face cream. The same may be said for the press agency of a dozen other national issues. Probably few people realize, however, that one of the bitterest and most amusing "public relations" campaigns of the past year has been that conducted by the Hawaiian sugar interests against the Jones-Costigan Act.

Other politico-industrial battles have had bigger and better lobbies, larger budgets, and more spectacular legal talent, but none has had more devious literary sidelights. Born in the brain of an advertising executive who two years ago "sold" himself to the various interlocking Hawaiian interests—sugar, pineapple, shipping, and tourist—as the Ivy Lee of the Pacific, it has been founded upon two assumptions: namely, that one page of display advertising should result in six pages of editorial matter (and no nonsense about "editorial integrity" either), and that any writer's name can be "had." The campaign itself has been conducted by the Pan-Pacific Press Bureau, ostensibly an unbiased news and feature service covering the Pacific area, but actually the publicity agency de luxe for the Hawaiian sugar and allied interests. The bureau is synonymous with Bowman, Deute, Cummings, Inc., the advertising agency handling the accounts of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association, the Matson Lines, the Hawaii Tourist Bureau, and the Hawaiian Pineapple Company. Since the passage of the Jones-Costigan Sugar Control Act in May, 1934, its primary function has been the defeat of the Hawaiian sugar quota by attempting to convince the American public—and incidentally the United States Supreme Court—that Hawaii is "an integral part of the United States," and therefore entitled to quota parity with American continental producers. To the service of this program, Sidney S. Bowman, executive of both the advertising agency and the press bureau, has tried to harness the talents—or at least the names—of novelists, short-story writers, journalists, moving-picture stars, professional travelers, cartoonists, broadcasters, and a member of the Cabinet. (One of the bureau's recent releases is "Law Enforcement in Hawaii" by Homer S. Cummings.) The literary and journalistic profession—ranging from Irvin S. Cobb, Vicki Baum, and Anita Loos in the higher-income brackets to mere contributors to the liberal journals in the lower—has been most persistently wooed because, as every advertising man knows, a stable of established writers provides an excellent entrée to editorial columns. But even though novelists and journalists frequently supplement their incomes by writing publicity or advertising copy, many of them are reluctant to lend their names for obvious political-propaganda purposes. The Pan-Pacific Press Bureau has stubbed its toe on more than one angle of editorial sophistication and literary integrity. It has had, however, its distinct triumphs. The most spec-

tacular of these was the recent Earhart flight from Hawaii to the mainland, for which its clients paid \$10,000.

Though there may seem to be little relation between a trans-Pacific hop and a Supreme Court decision on the Hawaiian sugar quota, the Hawaiian sugar interests—through Mr. Bowman—did not pay out \$10,000 "in the interests of science." A trans-oceanic flight, especially by our foremost woman aviator, is front-page news. From it flow publicity releases, personal interviews, signed stories, lectures, radio broadcasts—and in this case a possible moving picture featuring Miss Earhart and built around her flight, by her husband, George Palmer Putnam of Paramount. These are the legitimate by-products of long-distance flying, as they are of prize fighting or the winning of a Nobel prize. Through all such by-products of the Earhart flight there was to run a certain *leit-motif*—familiar by now in newspaper and magazine offices throughout the country as the theme song of the Hawaiian sugar planters in their fight against the AAA quota. Its dominant note is "Hawaii, an integral part of the United States," or the variant—"Hawaii, the southwest corner of the United States." The significance of these phrases will be discussed later. It was with the explicit understanding that this and allied "educational material" should be introduced into all the publicity flowing from the Hawaiian flight that Miss Earhart—through Mr. Putnam—received \$5,000 before her departure for the islands, with the promise of \$5,000 more before her take-off. In other words, the bureau cared not who flew the Pacific so long as it could write the theme song.

In spite of the facts that the "inspired" nature of the flight was revealed in *Editor and Publisher* of December 15 (in the course of an exposé of the Pan-Pacific Press Bureau's space-chiseling activities), and that the exact amount paid for it by the Planters' Association was revealed in the *San Francisco News* of January 4, Mr. Putnam has persisted, both before and since the flight, in denying its connection with any propaganda agency. Miss Earhart, who unquestionably is more interested in aviation than in sugar, has been merely hurt at the suggestion. But the facts are too well known to too many people to bear denial. And when Miss Earhart's "own story" of the flight, released through the North American Newspaper Alliance, appeared on the day after her landing, it bore, as was expected, the Pan-Pacific trademark—"the alluring southwest corner of the United States that is Hawaii." Because of the *News* scoop of January 4, the propaganda content of the flight publicity necessarily has been decreased.

During the eighteen hours spent by Miss Earhart in flying the Pacific from Honolulu to California probably the two most nervous persons in the world were George Palmer Putnam and the head of the Pan-Pacific Press Bureau. After the revelation that the flight was a publicity stunt, both the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* and the *San Francisco News*, together with a number of navy aviators, had urged that it be abandoned, since Miss Earhart would be risking not only her own life but those of the fliers sent out to find her

in case she was forced down. Had Miss Earhart been lost, the repercussion would have been unfortunate for Hawaiian sugar, Mr. Bowman, and Mr. Putnam, who made the arrangements. Luck was with them. The newspapers, knowing the truth, have been kind enough not to mention it in their stories of the flight.

Although Miss Earhart has been unquestionably the brightest feather in the Pan-Pacific Press cap, the always fertile field of Hollywood has not been neglected. College professors and experts have their uses, but for the glossy-papered monthlies there is nothing like a movie star. Here is an excerpt from a sample story prepared for the signature of Miss Claudette Colbert by a Pan-Pacific copy-writer, an account of the star's adventures in a Hawaiian rain storm:

After such a flattering speech, I did feel better and, with a little thought, even grateful that with such showers a more bountiful crop of sugar was in the making—Hawaii's perennial gift to her sister states from this *near-western part of the United States*.

To the credit of Miss Colbert, it must be said that she objected to the sugar content of this opus.

In a story released to the movie-magazine circuit, Miss Betty Compson, through her ghost writer, tells one how to develop a glamorous personality. The secret, it would seem, is travel—and particularly travel to Hawaii. In the midst of all this glamor there is sounded a strictly statistical note, strangely out of place from such a pen:

Ninety per cent of Hawaii's trade is with the mainland. Good times in the Islands mean good trade on the mainland, for in trade as in politics, *Hawaii is an integral part of the United States*.

And in an intimate little item, scheduled for a golfing journal and called Footloose in Hawaii, Mr. Frank Condon, short-story writer for the Hearst magazines, is made to say:

The sports of the whole country seem to be condensed into this very *integral part of the United States*.

Mr. Condon also is said to have objected to the amount of sugar in the compositions created in his name by the harried copy-writer.

A travelogue entitled Hawaiian Medley, by Joseph C. Granger, appearing in *Vanity Fair* in its December, 1934, issue, manages by a miracle of editorial manipulation both to quote the President and to mention the sugar quota within the space of a dozen lines:

"Your Administration in Washington," said Mr. Roosevelt, addressing a multitude whose eyebrows had a tendency to slant upward, "will not forget that you are in very truth an integral part of the nation."

The Administration may not forget that the Islands are American (though someone did when the sugar quotas were being established last spring and Hawaii was permitted to send the United States less sugar than foreign Cuba or the Philippines), but anyone going for pure pleasure to Hawaii . . . is strongly advised to do so.

If you happen to live in those less urban districts where editors are partially dependent upon boiler-plate, you may have opened your paper on the morning of your state's last birthday to find a full-page illustrated spread celebrating the event. A hundred to one it contained the following non-sequitur:

Eleven years after Washington [in this case] became a full-fledged state, Hawaii, then a republic, came into the Union on a territorial basis. . . . Hawaii is the sugar bowl of the country. . . . For that reason Washington citizens will watch closely the progress of the Hawaii sugar planters' suit contesting the sugar quota imposed by the Jones-Costigan Act. The people of Hawaii claim that it shows discrimination against Hawaii in favor of a foreign nation, failing to take cognizance of the fact that *Hawaii is an integral part of the United States*.

These "state birthday stories" featuring Hawaii have appeared in newspapers throughout the country during the past year.

Just recently the editor of a metropolitan rotogravure section discovered as he went to press that the four smiling socialites sipping drinks on the *lanai* of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel were able to smile in spite of the fact that the Jones-Costigan Sugar Act discriminates against *an integral part of the Union*.

All of this would be merely funny and of no particular significance if the same theme were not enlarged upon in some serious monthly review by some academic authority whose disinterestedness the editor may have accepted at face value, and in the daily newspaper columns. This is not to say that there are not academic authorities and newspaper editors who fully agree with the arguments of the Hawaiian sugar interests. But every one of the items mentioned, with the possible exception of the quotation from Mr. Granger, was written not by the person who signed it but by a copy-writer in the Bowman agency. One former copy-writer was startled to find one of his routine publicity stories appearing verbatim in the financial column of the *San Francisco Examiner*. A recent confidential report of the Pan-Pacific Press Bureau to its financial backers coyly admits the inspiration of editorials in the Hearst newspapers attacking Secretary Wallace and Rexford Tugwell (the red flag of internationalism was waved in this case), describes the "cultivation" of a Washington columnist who "will work our material into his syndicated column as conditions permit" and its efforts to influence the editorial policy of an important monthly magazine, and discusses the manipulation or attempted manipulation of editors, authors, columnists, broadcasters, and political reporters.

If all this seems a little far-fetched in relation to the AAA, it may be well to review briefly some of our recent sugar history. The three-cornered battle of the sugar barons—continental beet sugar, American insular, and the Cuban cane producers—has been waged with particular intensity since 1929, with Cuba steadily losing ground before the rapid increase in domestic production and a diminishing consumption. It has been waged with every type of propaganda and lobbying device. The Philippines owe their independence to the beet-sugar pressure, and the agitation for the reduction of the Cuban sugar duty was inspired less by the desperate plight of the Cuban workers than by the fate of \$600,000,000 worth of American investments in the island. Early in 1934, with the sugar caldron boiling over in Washington, the Roosevelt Administration attempted to solve the problem on the basis of a "planned" domestic program and a cut in the Cuban tariff. The Jones-Costigan Sugar Control Act was passed in May after a titanic battle for quota advantages on all sides. It made sugar a basic

commodity under the AAA, fixed definite quotas for the continental producers, and authorized the Secretary of Agriculture to allot quotas to the insular producers, including Hawaii. A processing tax was imposed on refined sugar, and the Cuban tariff was cut $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 per cent.

The continental growers were satisfied, Cuba was mollified, the colonial possessions protested weakly, and Hawaii rent the heavens with cries of discrimination. As "an integral part of the United States" it claimed parity with continental producers. In July the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association sought an injunction against the quota. Denied the injunction in October, it took an appeal to the United States Supreme Court. In the meantime the campaign to convince the American people that Hawaii has been discriminated against has been waged from every possible publicity angle. Privately it was whispered to Republican newspapers that Hawaii was being "punished" for its traditional Republicanism. To the Hearst newspapers the quota was portrayed as an evidence of the Administration's "internationalist" attitude toward Cuba.

It is not the purpose of this article to go into the merits of the quota, Hawaii's legal status, or the economic soundness of a crop-reduction program. The Hawaiian publicity campaign has not concerned itself in the least with this last issue or with the treatment of other insular producers. There are certain things to be said in behalf of Hawaii's feudal aristocracy—primarily, that its plantation wages and living conditions, poor as they may be, are infinitely superior to those of other insular producers and excel those of many of our agricultural states. But this argument is evidently considered by the Planters' Associa-

tion and its press bureau a dangerous one with a strictly proletarian appeal. Instead, the propaganda battle has been conducted on a high moral, patriotic, and constitutional note, ridiculously out of keeping with its methods. Those methods have been no more high-handed perhaps than the ones employed by the New York-financed Cuban interests or the Midwest beet-sugar people before the passage of the Jones-Costigan Act. The Cuban interests were the best-financed and undoubtedly paid the highest retainers. The beet-sugar people had the advantage of a large Congressional bloc. The Hawaiian campaign is backed by an impressive array of advertising power and unquestionably has the most sex appeal.

The use of literary "names" as first aid to editorial cooperation was probably suggested to the Bowman agency by its spectacular coup in the *Saturday Evening Post* more than two years ago. The occasion was the launching of the great new Matson liner. Under the signature of Peter B. Kyne there appeared at this particular moment a six-page "romance" of the building and launching of the new Pacific greyhound, a saga of the Matson family, and a fulsome testimonial to every firm, including the purveyors of the silverware, involved in the building or furnishing of the Matson boat. The article was profusely illustrated and was probably the most obvious and brazen piece of advertising ever to appear in an American periodical without the little word "advertisement." The *Post* was induced to leave that word out, and as a result is said to have got involved with the Post Office Department. It is the office joke at the Bowman agency that Mr. Kyne never saw the article until it appeared in print.

Bilbo the Rabble-Rouser

By RAYMOND GRAM SWING

THEODORE GILMORE BILBO, twice Governor of Mississippi, was clipping newspapers at \$6,000 a year for the AAA in Washington last summer; at least that was his function, though the piles of uncut newspapers mounted higher and higher in his tiny office and he spent much of his time chatting with stogie-smoking cronies who visited him there. One day he sent his stenographer to ask the guard on duty outside the Department of Agriculture building to arrange a permanent space for parking his car. Parking is the prime problem of the capital, and naturally the guard said it couldn't be done. Bilbo sent the stenographer back with the word that "Governor" Bilbo asked for it. The guard still refused. The newspaper cutter grew testy and drove the stenographer down a third time. The guard, looking at the crowded curb, threw up his hands and exclaimed, "I couldn't without arranging it with Einstein himself!"—a remark which the stenographer duly reported to her chief. "All right," shouted the former Governor, "go down and tell that guard to telephone Einstein, and get it arranged!"

Bilbo, former newspaper clipper, now occupies a commodious suite in the Senate Office Building and admits to looking forward to at least eighteen years in the Senate. No political down-and-out ever experienced a more dazzling

change in fortune. It smacks of the miraculous, even to those who know Mississippi. For if ever a politician was through in that state, after stepping out of the governorship, it was Bilbo in 1932. He had a few friends, but his last record in the Statehouse was phenomenally blank; a pig-headed legislature had blocked him in every effort to build a machine or foster constructive legislation. He was broke. He had to give up his heavily mortgaged pecan farm, worth \$75,000, because he could not raise \$500 to settle a claim against him. The job of newspaper clipper in Washington was a life-saver. It happens that it set him up politically, too, like a restorative. For it demonstrated to the wiseacres in Mississippi that Bilbo wasn't so dead after all. He still had "influence" with somebody, and that somebody was Senator Pat Harrison. Bilbo without Harrison was nothing, a pathetic relic. Bilbo with Harrison—well, he was the only man ever twice elected governor, and Harrison was the universally accepted elder "statesman" of Mississippi.

Bilbo wanted to succeed his old personal enemy Senator Hubert D. Stephens as Senator from Mississippi, and when he learned that Stephens as member of the Senate Commerce Committee was considering the approval of Dr. Willard Thorp as expert to the Department of Commerce, though Thorp, an Amherst man, once registered as a Re-

publican, he had his cue. He returned to Mississippi, told the boys that Stephens was about to give a \$9,000 job to a damn Yankee Republican, and began his extraordinary campaign for Stephens's job. He came in second to Stephens in the first primary and beat him in the run-off. He won because he is a rabble-rouser, second only in talent to Huey Long in the South. Even with the shadowy support of Pat Harrison behind him, his victory was miraculous. A real rabble-rouser is a wondrous creature.

Bilbo is a little fellow in his middle fifties; usually wears loud check suits (in Washington they are more subdued), a red tie, and a diamond horseshoe tie pin. He has a wide skull with far-apart pale-blue eyes, a pointed chin, and a lipless straight mouth which makes a grim, thin line across his face. But the line belies his nature, for in him lurks a rare devilment, which is one of the essential condiments of the true rabble-rouser, who must have a genius for instantaneous, crushing, and laughter-provoking sallies. A lay preacher of Baptist persuasion, Bilbo looks the part until the devilment in him is provoked. Then the eyes come to life, the grim mouth smiles boyishly, and out comes the devilment without reservation. The performance is part of his stock in trade, but it also can get him into hot water. During the last campaign for governor he called a certain local candidate a man "who was found newly born in a cemetery, suckling a sow," and the candidate followed him across the state and nearly brained him with a revolver butt in a railroad car. This experience cost him weeks in a hospital. But biting invective, the stronger the better, is essential to rabble-rousing, and the spontaneous gift of it is one of Bilbo's great attributes. He and Stephens crossed swords in 1931 in a famous exchange. Stephens had gone to the hospital and was expected to die. But the thought of Bilbo, who as governor would have the appointment of his successor, revived him, and he issued a statement accusing Bilbo of waiting like a ghoul for him to die. To this Bilbo replied in writing: "Hubert Stephens is a vicious, malicious, pusillanimous, cold-blooded, premeditated, plain, ordinary United States Senatorial liar." And of Huey Long, whom he dislikes still more than Stephens, he predicted in a speech on the border of Louisiana: "Within five or eight years he will end in one of three places, or all three: in an asylum, in the penitentiary, or in hell." The Senate is not likely soon to see a demonstration of this talent of Bilbo's, for he has adopted the self-denying discipline of not making a speech for a year. But let Huey Long once taunt him, the devilment in Bilbo will not be denied and he will show the Upper House how picturesque invective can be.

Invective, of course, is not the whole of rabble-rousing or even more than an essential detail. A greater part is rhetoric, flowing, sententious, high-flown, and the still greater part is theme. The rabble-rouser must know the prejudices of his rabble. In this knowledge Bilbo has attested his expertness. He has been elected state senator, lieutenant-governor, governor on two occasions, and now United States Senator. The expertness was specially demonstrated in last summer's Senatorial campaign, when Bilbo clearly had to cover the entire field of prejudices if he were to overcome the handicaps he faced. He must make a wholesale job of it, and he did. His platform ran to twenty-seven points. The chief four of them, essential to success in Mississippi, were social security, particularly unemployment insurance and old-

age pensions, government control of the Federal Reserve System, payment of the bonus, and redistribution of wealth. That is the essence of radicalism in the South and fairly generally throughout the Middle West. Where election depends finally on mass response, this is the kind of special appeal that is needed. Bilbo went the whole way down that particular road. He also advocated shorter working hours and more than a living wage for labor, but he showed no really coherent scheme of society, nor, indeed, any knowledge of the social structure. He threw in a few bright ideas of his own; one of them, preparedness for war, was decorated with the proviso that every Congressman qualified for service should resign on declaration of war and be placed in the ranks of the first attacking forces. Another was the return to two-cent postage. The full details do not matter; so long as one recalls again that monetary expansion, government banking, payment of the bonus, redistribution of wealth, and social security are what plain people want their Senators to believe in. This holds for the red-necks and hill-billies and plain townsmen of Mississippi; it holds as well for their kinsfolk almost anywhere.

Such an appeal is not enough of itself to elect a man to the Senate, not even if the candidate also has the gift of invective. He needs the further attributes of tireless vocal chords and a lust for travel within the state. Stephens lost the election because, a crippled man whose foot had been amputated, he could not get out into the piney-woods country and meet the people, and partly because he did not take his opposition seriously. But the little fellow in the bookmaker's suit is a phenomenon. He delivered more than a thousand speeches during his campaign—all long-winded, full-length affairs. He spoke six or eight times a day, which means that he was orating on his feet for as long as the average clerk sat at his desk during the same months. At the end of the campaign he had been seen in nearly every hamlet in the state, had spoken in every county, and had been heard by almost everyone who might possibly be interested in politics. Almost frail in physique he gained ten pounds in weight during the ordeal. Rabble-rousing is a strenuous occupation which might kill a weakling, but apparently it also can be as health-giving as a vitamin diet.

Certainly purity of political behavior is not requisite to the success of the rabble-rouser. Though in the South allowances are quickly made, since politics after all is a game with accepted rules, Bilbo played it with sensational crudity, as for instance in the field of education. This makes a diverting chapter in the past of a Senator. Mississippians will boast to the visitor that the state has always been a pioneer in education, by which they mean that it opened the first state college for women in the country, started the first state agricultural high schools, and has consolidated its little red schoolhouses into larger units with a teacher for each grade. But when Bilbo was governor he removed in one day the heads of the University of Mississippi, the State College for Women, and the Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College, and lopped off 179 professors and teachers for political reasons. For president of the Agricultural and Mechanical College he chose the director of public relations of the Mississippi Power and Light Company. For chancellor of the State University he chose a real-estate salesman without a college degree. He named a new administrative board for the university which consisted of two dentists, one bank

cashier, one physician, and three lawyers. Patronage is the basis of state power and Bilbo was having trouble with his legislature, not being able to get enough money spent to build up his machine. That is one reason he dipped into the schools and demoralized them. But at the same time he avowed a deep interest in education, sought to move the University of Mississippi from Oxford to Jackson, and wanted to spend vast sums on a new plant. The students burned him in effigy and that scheme fell through. Bilbo, however, insisted on a new plant and rebuilt the university at Oxford at a cost of \$2,000,000.

The patronage problem did not loom so large during Bilbo's first term as governor, 1916-20. He initiated the school consolidation and built a school for the feeble-minded and a tuberculosis sanitarium. Looking backward, even his present enemies admit it was a fairly good showing. But the second term, which ended in 1931, was a stormy and fruitless time. It was one long wrangle over the new state insane asylum. It may strike the outsider as morbid that the chief state enterprise of recent years is this institution, probably the finest in America. It was begun under Bilbo's predecessor, and when Bilbo became governor he naturally wanted to cut in on the spending, so as to build up his machine. The legislature objected; Bilbo equally stubborn, would not issue the necessary bonds. The asylum was half built and was left, so to speak, in mid-air while Bilbo and the legislature blocked each other. The old asylum at Jackson had accommodation for 1,400 patients, but actually was housing 2,500; probably 200 were dying each year who might have lived in the new quarters. At last Bilbo compromised when a \$10,000 architect of his choosing was appointed to the board, and construction could be continued. When completed, the institution will have cost \$5,500,000, and the group of eighty buildings, with many bronze fixtures and marble baths, will be the pride of the South.

The legislature heartlessly obstructed Bilbo's whole program. He had promised during his campaign to build brick-paved roads throughout the state, the bricks to be made by convict labor; this was his parallel to Huey Long's road-building project in Louisiana. He wanted a state printing plant where all state schoolbooks would be printed for free distribution, a modification of a Long idea. He wanted a central state purchasing agent, a worthy project if politics did not enter into the matter. He had a scheme for reorganizing and consolidating the agricultural schools of the state. He proposed a central board of trustees for all state colleges, a state constabulary appointed by the governor and responsible to him, an \$82,000,000 bond issue to finance road buildings (after he had dropped the convict-labor scheme), and a $\frac{1}{4}$ of 1 per cent sales tax. He got none of it. But most of the platform was promptly passed by Bilbo's successor after the little Governor, impoverished and discredited, had retired to private life.

The state highway scheme with its huge bond issue led Bilbo into close fellowship with high finance, and he was near at one time to getting his money on an I.O.U., the bonds actually to be deposited in a bank outside the state. The eminent group which played with him was interested on a vast scale in road material, and one of the principals, Luke Lea, is now in prison. This project would have been a vast "gravy-dish," but the money was not borrowed after all, and when he retired the state was \$11,500,000 in the

hole and its credit was in jeopardy. His successor had to clap on a 2 per cent sales tax, a 20 per cent cigarette tax, and a 6 cent gasoline tax, and slash the overhead of all state institutions by 35 per cent, while complaints were made that some children in state institutions were going hungry to bed. One would think this would have made Mississippi an impossible place for Bilbo, who at least was partly to blame.

There were other demerits for him to overcome. Even in Mississippi it was not quite to his credit that he had launched his candidacy for governor from the yard of a prison from which he had just been released. This happened in 1923. He had gone to prison to avoid testifying in a seduction suit brought against his successor, Governor Russell, by a woman employee of the state. He was imprisoned for contempt, after having been found hiding in his barn on his Pearl River farm. Another judicial matter also not wholly reassuring was his impeachment for bribery in 1910. He had taken money for his vote in a Senatorial convention. There was plenty of evidence to show that he accepted the money to trap the bribers, for before taking it he discussed the trap with friends. But the evidence also showed that the bills with which the bribe was paid were not the bills he ultimately returned, and he escaped impeachment by only one vote. But nobody in Mississippi ever charges him with having grown rich from politics. Indeed, he is known as one of those unhappy mortals who live in a tangle of debts and he probably never owned a clear \$10,000 in his life.

Senator Bilbo from a national point of view is not a menace, but he is a portent. What he has done to conquer difficulties in Mississippi he probably never will undertake elsewhere. If he were ten years younger, knowing the rabble throughout America to be not unlike the rabble of Mississippi, he might go out to rouse it. He is a portent in that the right kind of promise-maker, with strong enough lungs, persistent enough abuse of his enemies, and picturesque enough personality, can sway the masses if they are economically ready to be swayed. The point about Bilbo may be that Huey Long is a menace, since they are so much alike, for Huey is fifteen years younger, possesses lungs and the talent of vituperation, and can make promises as fast as they can be listened to. But happily Bilbo stands somewhat in Huey's way. Psychologists will understand why they detest each other—Huey calls him "just a plain damn fool"—and Bilbo's election is a setback for Huey's plan to conquer the South, defeat Pat Harrison and Joe Robinson, and invade the North after gobbling up Georgia and Tennessee on the way. Huey has countless members of his "Share Our Wealth" movement in Mississippi, but when the issue has to be fought out for supremacy there, Bilbo can raise the rabble as well as he can. So for the present Huey is leaving Bilbo strictly alone, and Bilbo, heavily laden with the dignity of being a United States Senator, is saying nothing whatever. It would hurt Huey's plans to let his "message" to the American people fritter away in a factional feud with Bilbo. But Long has an impetuous tongue and it may escape his control one day at the sight of his little rival, and then the world will be regaled with the finest tom-cat fight ever seen in the Capitol. One may pray it will happen, not for the sheer bizarre amusement or it, but because it would do something, at least, to hamper Huey. This suggests the interesting conclusion that if there must be rabble-rousing, it is better to have two masters in the field than one.

If the Court Turns Thumbs Down

By HENRY HAZLITT

IN two articles in *The Nation* of March 30 and April 6, 1932, the present writer maintained that the devaluation of the dollar, on net balance, would be far preferable to the continued policy of deflation that otherwise seemed inevitable. The proposal at that time was nowhere being seriously discussed; and in the atmosphere of the Hoover Administration, when so few things seemed possible, the scheme appeared even to myself remote and academic. I remarked apologetically that for its practical realization we should have to assume a few political "miracles." One of these had to do with convincing the President and Congress of the necessity of the step and of the quick method by which it had to be taken. I continued:

In an American devaluation program we have to assume one more miracle. When devaluation was carried out in France and Germany, bonds were payable in terms of currency, and were automatically scaled down with everything else. But since the scare of 1896 nearly all bonds in the United States have been payable in terms of gold. If you take almost any American bond, public or private, you will find that it is payable "in gold coin of the United States of America, of or equal to the standard of weight and fineness as it existed on"—the date of issuance of the bond. Here is a "sacred" contract, a private contract. Would the courts—would, specifically and finally, the members of the Supreme Court—permit Congress to declare that such a contract could be put aside—that the bond could be paid in currency and not in gold? If every judge thought of economic consequences as Justice Brandeis does, it is imaginable that such gold contracts, after devaluation, might be declared null and void because their fulfilment would be contrary to public policy. It is imaginable that the Supreme Court would hold that just as an individual corporation in bankruptcy must have its debts scaled down, regardless of its previous contracts, so must a nation when it would otherwise face general bankruptcy. It is imaginable, but not probable. For it is in general the pride of the legal mind that it decides on precedent and "principle," and maintains an Olympian unconcern regarding the mere social consequences of its decisions. Only five justices would need to be legalistic to assure that one of the most important parts of the program of devaluation would be defeated.

One is disposed, now that the case is actually before the court, to be more sympathetic toward its dilemma. Judges have always protested that they are not legislators; that it is their function, as judges, to decide not on the economic consequences of sanctioning or upsetting a law, but merely on the interpretation or constitutionality of the law. There have been innumerable guesses as to what the Supreme Court will actually decide in the present case. These guesses need not here be rehearsed, but one thing may be said with some confidence. There can be little doubt that most of the judges, as economic men, want to support the government, would like to see the gold contracts abrogated. They know as well as anybody the crushing and appalling burden it would put on private debtors and on the government to have their gold debts—estimated at some \$100,000,000,000—sud-

denly increased by 70 per cent. They know what this would mean for the government's credit, for future taxation, and in terms of wholesale bankruptcies. They know that under present conditions it would merely throw huge unearned windfall profits into the laps of creditors, who would chiefly turn out to be a new crop of speculators and gamblers.

But how can they decide against the gold clause, and save their faces, as judges? The gold clause is too explicit to be interpreted away. It does not just say "dollars." It does not say legal tender. It does not say gold coin of the current weight, or of the weight that Congress in its infinite wisdom has most recently fixed. It says gold coin of the precise weight and fineness that existed on the day that the contract was made. And the judges know, and the government knows, that this clause was inserted by borrowers solely for the purpose of assuring lenders against precisely the sort of change that Congress has made; otherwise there would have been no point in inserting it at all.

The dominant opinion, at the moment of writing, is that the court will somehow find a way, not too humiliating, too inconsistent with its usual ways of reasoning, or too dangerous as a precedent, to hold that the gold clause can be abrogated. But even if there is one chance in ten of the court's deciding the other way, there is too much at stake for Congress not to have some measure immediately in hand for counteracting the potential damage. In my article of April 6, 1932, I suggested that one possible measure would be a special tax:

If the devaluation amounted to 33⅓ per cent, for example, the federal government could place a tax of 33⅓ per cent on all receipts—whether of interest or principal—representing the fulfilment of gold contracts made before the date of devaluation. Such a tax would be no more "discriminatory" than the excise tax on tobacco; it would take away nothing but windfall profits. And though it would not help to relieve the burden on those saddled with gold debts, it would at least secure social justice by preventing gold creditors from profiteering. It would, incidentally—for such a tax could be deducted at the source—bring in very heavy federal revenues.

Proposals similar to this have now been brought forward. Representative Dies is reported to have prepared a bill providing for a tax equal to 40 per cent of the principal and interest on private obligations payable in gold.

I now recognize, however, that this plan would not be adequate. What is necessary is that private debtors be relieved of the burden of having to pay the gold debts, or of the fear of that burden. This can be achieved very simply. It would merely be necessary to make the special tax on gold payments *greater* than the percentage of devaluation. For our present 41 per cent of devaluation, for example, we could place a tax on gold payments of 50 per cent. The result would be that only an occasional crank, bent on cutting off his own nose for the sake of injuring a corporation, would demand gold payment. If he did not demand it, he would receive \$100 new dollars for every \$100 of old debt. If he

did demand it, \$169 new dollars would be set aside for him for \$100 of old debt; but under the 50 per cent tax \$84.50 would be deducted and only \$84.50 forwarded.

It may be said that if the Supreme Court throws out the gold-clause repudiation it would throw out this too, under the "due process" clause or on the ground that it was an obvious dodge. But this is to assume that the Supreme Court would be on the warpath rather than, as I prefer to believe, hopefully on the lookout for some reconciling formula. The Supreme Court has supported obvious dodges before. A significant case is that of the federal tax of 10 per cent placed on the notes of state banks. This was decided in 1869. "That the tax was so excessive as to in-

dicade a purpose on the part of Congress to destroy the franchise of the state bank [Chief Justice Chase] held was a matter which the court could not consider. 'The power to tax may be exercised oppressively upon persons, but the responsibility of the legislature is not to the court but to the people, by whom its members are elected.'" (Charles Warren: "The Supreme Court in U. S. History"; Vol. II, p. 508.)

It seems possible not only for Congress to have such a measure ready, but to adopt it immediately and allay the present uneasiness. Even if it is itself eventually rejected by the court, which does not seem likely, precious time will have been gained for a more permanent solution.

Party Regularity in 1936?

Washington, January 21

THE election of Senator Cutting of New Mexico is to be challenged after all. Notice of contest was filed with the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections by Cutting's opponent, Dennis Chavez. It was quite the most upsetting political development of last week, for it throws into doubt the President's entire informal alliance with the Progressives. Some of them, at least, believe the President himself has thrown down the gauge and could have prevented the contest if he had so willed. The basis of the contest is not yet known, as particulars had not been filed at this writing. Time must elapse before the issue can be decided, since an investigation will have to be held in New Mexico. The contest came as a surprise, for it had been understood that the Democratic leaders in the Senate did not wish to unseat Cutting. Thus the decision for a fight was not made in the Senate, which means that Farley had a hand in it. And Farley could not have acted without authorization from the President.

Now a great deal can be read into this situation. It might even mean that the President has decided to run in 1936 without the help of Progressive leaders. It might mean that the pressure from Democrats in New Mexico and throughout the Southwest was so strong that Farley and the President felt they must heed it. Or it might simply be a personal punishment of Senator Cutting as a man whom the President has grown to dislike. The first of these readings is the hardest to believe, for the President will not be strong enough in 1936 to win without Progressive votes, even if he might think he could dispense with alliances with Progressive leaders. But there would be a certain allurements in the idea of making the victory of 1936 a purely Democratic triumph, with no debts owing outside the party. The present Administration is an informal coalition, with Ickes as the symbol of it in the Cabinet, and with many non-partisan appointees in the huge army of New Dealers brought into Washington. Purely party consideration would insist on the coalition ending as soon as it could be managed, so as to give all the jobs to worthy Democrats. But however alluring, the idea does not now appear sound. It is one thing for the President to decapitate Cutting, but it would be incredible to see him break with Norris or La Follette. He needs Norris's loyal support in his power

policy, and he will need La Follette more and more as the outstanding radical in the agricultural Northwest. But the break with Cutting is not easy to justify. Two years ago the President was trying to give him the Interior portfolio, as weighty an assignment as he had to offer. Beyond the fact that Cutting voted for the bonus, there is nothing in his Washington record to explain the change in the President's attitude.

If it were true that the President is now steering into strictly partisan waters, Secretary Ickes would have to ask himself about his own future. It may be far-fetched to dwell for a moment on the troubles he is now enduring, and to speculate whether they have anything to do with his being the one coalitionist in the Cabinet—cynics call him the last liberal. One of his petty annoyances is the torpedo fired at him about the activities of his two subordinates, Burlew and Glavis. This was fired from the White House. It did not explode, but it churned up an ominous channel. The President was able to say he had nothing to do with it. So was Mrs. Roosevelt. The charge against Burlew was that as "bottle-neck" man in the Interior Department he was wielding an insidious influence against certain New Deal enterprises. Whoever else may be convinced that this is so, Secretary Ickes is wholly satisfied with his subordinate and considers him the ablest individual in the department. The charge against Glavis is that in investigating certain Interior matters he overheard a telephone conversation with someone of the White House secretariat. But Ickes is content to have Glavis go on investigating affairs of the Interior Department, the chips to fall where they may, since the Secretary is solemnly, even tediously, determined to have everything in his vast domain strictly honest. A further difficulty for the Secretary is the Moses matter. Now this is an instance where he is not acting on his own behalf—he hardly knows Moses—but is gallantly accepting the brickbats as vicar of his chief. He himself does not say so; he is much too good a sport for that. But the situation needs further deciphering. If there is no White House drive against Progressives, the troubles of Mr. Ickes are not remarkable. But if Cutting is to go and if Progressives are to be shaken off in 1936, Mr. Ickes may reasonably expect still more troubles.

The Moses episode, so far as the public can see, is a

simple case of the President not liking the man. Moses has had the poor grace to attack both the Lehman and the Roosevelt Administration, publicly and privately, while being an employee of both. This, politically speaking, is bad manners. He is being punished as though manners were as important as signal ability. Further, the Moses affair makes the Cutting affair look like personal punishment. But this is the most unsatisfactory of all interpretations to recommend, since it would suggest that after two years of patience and good-humor the President had grown fussy about criticism, and was beginning to feel the strain of office.

To come back to Cutting, a good deal of whispering went on in New Mexico, which now is being disseminated in the East. It is worth stating that during the campaign Senator Byrnes, chairman of the Senate Committee on Campaign Expenditures, sent an agent to New Mexico to make an investigation. He did so without the authorization of his full committee, though what the agent reported was duly laid before the committee. His account contained a certain amount of the New Mexican tittle-tattle, but no real evidence of corruption. The Senate committee considered it carefully and finally decided unanimously not to make an investigation. Senator Byrnes is a loyal Administration man, and one must suppose that this agent, chosen to do the Administration the service of measuring up the election, would have supplied genuine evidence of corruption if it existed.

Huey Long became the first to speak in Cutting's behalf on the floor of the Senate. The large Louisianian nose is sharp. It smelled out the chances for Huey to strike at the White House and make friends with a Progressive at the same time. Last week he was talking about running for President in 1936 with a Progressive as vice-president. And last week, for his part, the President promised second place on the Democratic ticket to Garner, which is certainly a deep and unnecessary tribute to pay to party regularity.

* * * * *

The fears here about the Supreme Court decision on the gold clause subsided last week as quickly as they had risen the week before. The sudden calm was almost as strange as the sudden alarm. The first explanation at hand is that the Administration made known, somewhat tardily, that the gold content of the dollar would not be changed no matter what the court ruled. This intent was demonstrated by the drastic use of the exchange-equalization fund to maintain the decreed level of the dollar abroad, the first really extensive use of the fund yet made. Besides, Washington has more than one way to meet an adverse ruling. It could clap an excise tax on all profits made by collecting gold bonds at \$1.69 to the dollar, which would solve the domestic problem. Or there might be a still simpler procedure. The government might pay its bonds in gold coin as required by contract, then seize the gold from the payee the instant he received it, giving him paper currency in exchange, since the possession of gold coin is illegal. No doubt still other devices have been proposed in addition to the major action of amending the Constitution or enlarging the Supreme Court. Thus the calm of last week was psychological. The possibility of evading the court made it less to be feared. Whatever its function in the American system of government, this was seen to be one of preserving institutions, not destroying them.

R. G. S.

In the Driftway

IF there are no young children about, the Drifter has a few words to say about the much-mooted subject of spinach. For himself, he finds that when it is picked fresh and cooked dry—with most of the sand washed off—it is quite edible, although turnip greens are much better and young beet tops best of all. But a correspondent in Switzerland who will hardly suffer the detested weed on his table sends a recipe for second-day spinach that sounds rather fetching. It is a Swabian dish and is called spinach pudding. You mix cooked spinach—that has been returned from the table uneaten the day before, doubtless—with eggs, butter, flour; lay it on a couple of milk-softened rolls in a pudding dish and boil for two hours. The proportions are properly given in the document received by the Drifter. But it does not really matter. If you put in plenty of butter and eggs, and if your rolls are nicely baked from fine white flour and your milk sweet, then obviously baking them together, even with spinach, would make a very palatable dish.

* * * * *

ALL this is merely a preamble to another document culled by Alice Stone Blackwell out of Harriet Beecher Stowe. It concerns pie. Obviously New England pie, since it was in New England that pie-making first became an art; and obviously in the early days of our New England fathers, because only then were there stomachs big enough and tough enough to receive a daily quota of pie with safety. Hear Mrs. Stowe:

The making of pies at this period assumed vast proportions. Pies were made by forties and fifties and hundreds, and made of everything on the earth and under the earth.

The pie is an English institution which, planted on American soil, forthwith ran rampant and burst forth into an untold variety of genera and species. Not merely the old traditional mince pie, but a thousand strictly American seedlings from that main stock evinced the power of American housewives to adapt old institutions to new uses. Pumpkin pies, cranberry pies, huckleberry pies, cherry pies, green-currant pies, peach, pear, and plum pies, custard pies, apple pies, Marlborough pudding pies—pies with top crusts and pies without, pies adorned with all sorts of fanciful flutings and architectural strips laid across and around, and otherwise varied—attested the boundless fertility of the feminine mind when once let loose in a given direction.

The Drifter had some difficulty in digesting even the idea of this much pie. But a note tacked on to it by Mrs. Blackwell sent him reeling from the table. "The surplus pies," Mrs. Blackwell explained, "were stored in a large, cold northern chamber, where they remained safely frozen, and were drawn upon for the use of the family all winter. Pies baked at Thanksgiving often came out fresh and good with the violets of April."

* * * * *

A BENIGN Providence has seen to it that in general we no longer have large cold northern chambers to store hundreds of pies in, and the chances of the human race for survival are correspondingly bettered. But let no

one think that in a day of small apartments and scant storage space, the hiving instinct has failed us entirely. The Drifter has an amiable young friend with a still younger and equally amiable son. "I don't much care about leaving him a fortune," the young father explained. "Or rather, I don't much mind not leaving him one, as I shall not. But I should like to leave him a cellar. I think it would be fine if I could accumulate about 5,000 bottles of really good wine for him. I've arranged for cellar space in a cave under the city—I can't tell you just where—and there I am laying away his inheritance." The Drifter has gradually recovered from his astonishment at this surprising statement, but further to confound his readers he will add that the charmingly romantic and old-fashioned idea came from a metropolitan who is at home nowhere but in New York City, and who is thoroughly au courant with the latest political and literary chit-chat. The cold-pie chamber may have vanished, along with most of the pie, especially at breakfast time. But the cold-pie idea is with us still. Let the revolution be ever so imminent, we still manage to expect next April, and to act accordingly.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Salvemini and the Casa

[Professor Salvemini of Harvard has kindly turned over to *The Nation* for publication the following correspondence between himself and the Graduate Club of Italian Studies at Columbia. It will be recalled by our readers that the three officers of the club in a letter published on November 21, 1934, denied *The Nation's* charges of fascist control in the Italian Department of the university and asserted that "it is part of our program for this year to invite Professor Gaetano Salvemini to speak on some phase of contemporary Italian history." Three and a half weeks after writing this letter the Graduate Club dispatched the invitation. The correspondence printed herewith carries the story from that date until now.]

DEAR PROFESSOR SALVEMINI:

The Graduate Club of Italian Studies together with the History Graduate Club of Columbia University extend you a very cordial invitation to speak at a joint meeting, the week of January 5-11, 1935, on the subject Italian Nationalism from 1870 to the World War. For the past two years we have been working on a series of papers on Italian Nationalism from the French Revolution to Fascism. The series was opened with a general discussion of nationalism in history by Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes, of the History Department of Columbia University.

In view of the recent exposures in *The Nation* in regard to fascist activities at Columbia University, we think that some explanation is due you in extending this invitation. First, and above all, we do not want you to feel that you are being invited now on account of the statements in *The Nation*. There is no afterthought connected with this invitation. Our regard for you as an eminent Italian scholar and historian is too great. We want you to know that it was our intention to have you come last year, and our invitation was delayed only because we wanted to complete the series of papers on nationalism on which we were then still engaged. Last year no outside speaker

was invited. This year we opened our discussions with a lecture on Italian Lyric Poetry during the Napoleonic Era by Paul Hazard. We have also invited Professor Arthur Livingston to discuss Pareto with us, as well as Professor Irwin Edman of the Philosophy Department of Columbia to discuss the subject of Nationalism in Philosophy.

We sincerely hope that you can arrange to accept our invitation. If the dates mentioned are not suitable will you kindly suggest to us when you will be free to come. We assure you that we all look forward to your coming.

M. F. GRILLI,

For the Graduate Club of Italian Studies
and the History Graduate Club

Casa Italiana, New York, November 28

DEAR MR. GRILLI:

Your invitation to speak at the joint meeting of the Clubs of Italian Studies and of History of Columbia University was gladly received. I have no doubt that—as you have taken the pains to explain—this invitation is not an afterthought connected with the recent exposures in *The Nation* in regard to fascist activities at Columbia University. Since, however, these exposures are now matter of history (we historians are more concerned with facts than with intentions), the general public which does not know the inner details of events might give to



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LETTERS

FROM

GREENROOM

GHOSTS

by JOHN MASON BROWN

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this invitation from your club and to my eventual acceptance of it an interpretation that would not be very flattering either to me or to Columbia University.

Furthermore, I gather from your letter that the headquarters of your club are at the Casa Italiana, and hence that the meeting at which I am invited to speak will take place in the institution of which Professor Prezzolini is the director. In view of these facts I think that to avoid misunderstandings my acceptance of your invitation must be subordinated to one essential condition, and this is that Professor Prezzolini as the director of the Casa Italiana extends to me personally an invitation to attend the meeting of the two clubs at the Casa Italiana. Without such an invitation I do not think it convenient to cross the threshold of that institution.

I venture to suggest also that in view of President Butler's letter to *The Nation*, Professor Prezzolini ought to inform President Butler of this invitation, so that in the case of unfavorable comments or misinterpretations there should be—as you Americans say—"no passing of the bucket."

Cambridge, Mass., December 6 GAETANO SALVEMINI

MY DEAR PROFESSOR SALVEMINI:

We appreciate very much your willingness to address us. However, we regret that Professor Prezzolini will not satisfy the conditions laid down in your letter.

M. F. GRILLI,

For the Graduate Club of Italian Studies
Casa Italiana, New York, December 19

MY DEAR PROFESSOR SALVEMINI:

In view of the fact that we could not meet your conditions in extending our previous invitation to speak to us, and since, as a result, we feel our freedom to invite other speakers in

the future to be uncertain and subject to misunderstandings, the Graduate Club of Italian Studies of Columbia University has decided to sever all connection as an organization with the Casa Italiana and will henceforth hold all its meetings somewhere else on the Columbia University campus.

Since our position as liberal American students interested in the study of Italian culture is now clear and unequivocal, the Graduate Club of Italian Studies has again charged me to renew its invitation to you to speak to us at a joint meeting with the Graduate History Club (whose separate invitation has already been issued to you), at a date convenient to you and on the subject, as suggested in our original invitation, Italian Nationalism from 1870 to the World War.

We are confident that you will arrange to accept this invitation and therefore we look forward to your coming with a great deal of pleasure.

New York, January 9

M. F. GRILLI

A Denial from Ferrero

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I beg you to publish some rectifications to the article by President Butler published in *The Nation* of November 14, 1934.

I have never been asked to give a lecture at the Casa Italiana. I was invited to be a guest there while I was in the States in the spring of 1931, but I did not accept this invitation. I lunched once at the Casa Italiana, but not as guest of the Casa. I was a guest of Mr. Prezzolini, who asked me as a personal friend and not in the name of the institution he is in charge of. At the lunch were five or six professors of Columbia University, but no member of the board of the Casa Italiana. Of this board I never saw anyone except Mr. Prezzolini, whom I knew when he was still in Italy.

GUGLIELMO FERRERO

Geneva, Switzerland, December 1, 1934



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Contributors to This Issue

LESLIE FORD is the pseudonym of a well-known author.

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Labor and Industry

The Newspapers and Child Labor

By DOROTHY DUNBAR BROMLEY

ON December 12 Elisha Hanson, counsel of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, talked over the radio on "The Purity of the Press." "It is to the everlasting credit of the news associations and the press of this country," he declared, "that their work cannot be defiled." The gentleman's claim is a trifle comic in view of the concerted and prejudiced attacks which the A. N. P. A. and many of its member papers, under Mr. Hanson's guidance, have made upon the child-labor amendment during the past year.

The attitude of many of the country's papers toward the amendment underwent a sea change as soon as the newspaper code came up for discussion. From the beginning the publishers argued that the freedom of the press would be abridged should regulations be imposed that would "unreasonably raise the cost of production or unreasonably decrease the return from publishing." The publishers themselves were to determine these limits. President Roosevelt spoke to the point when he said, in signing the newspaper code in February, 1934, "the freedom guaranteed by the Constitution is freedom of expression, and that will be scrupulously respected, but it is not freedom to work children or do business in a fire trap or violate the laws against obscenity, libel, and lewdness." At this time he asked that a further report be made on working conditions among newsboys.

The publishers were quick to assume a sanctimonious air. "The financial end of this question," said Mr. Hanson at the June, 1934, hearings, "does not concern us for a minute. It is not a commercial proposition. It is not child labor, not by any stretch of the imagination." The same argument was elaborated by H. W. Stodghill, president and circulation manager of the Louisville *Courier-Journal* (Ambassador Bingham's paper), and chairman of the welfare committee of the International Circulation Managers' Association. "There is a question," he said at the hearings, "as to whether the work of the newspaper boy is child labor or play by contrast with the errand boy, the messenger boy, the boy that works in a mill. I say it is play." Mr. Stodghill dwelt on the comparative lightness of the newsboy's work, the many benefits offered by his own and other papers in the way of swimming pools, and other social-welfare features.

Compare, now, the publishers' claims with the findings of the Children's Bureau, whose investigators visited seventeen different cities and questioned 1,259 street sellers and 1,830 newspaper carriers under sixteen years of age. While Mr. Stodghill had presented figures showing that the average carrier earned \$3.47 and the average street seller \$3.22 a week, the investigators found that boys under sixteen earned much less than these amounts. Indeed, 17 per cent of the street sellers under sixteen were earning less than 50 cents a week, and two-thirds of this group less than \$2. Among the carriers, 27 per cent earned under \$1 a week and 75 per cent less than \$3. In many localities competition was keen and there was a superfluity of young boys in the field.

Although conditions in some cities were found to be better than in others, the hours which the newsboys worked were hardly conducive to health or to a spirit of "play." One-third of the street sellers were under fourteen, and many of these young boys worked until eight o'clock in the evening and later in the winter. In one small city thirty-six boys out of fifty-eight who were interviewed worked at selling their papers until ten and later. A twelve-year-old boy had the day before worked from the close of school until five o'clock and again from half-past nine until two in the morning. Another twelve-year-old had sold from four o'clock till midnight. Still another was on the streets from eight Saturday morning until two Sunday morning, with one hour out for meals, while on school days he sold from four in the afternoon until midnight and again on Sunday night, earning all told \$2.75 a week.

While the carrier boys do not put in such long hours, the Children's Bureau found that about three-fourths of them start work before six in the morning. The "little merchant" system, furthermore, is a doubtful blessing, since it obliges the boy to solicit accounts, keep books, and collect as well as deliver. The majority of the newspapers, as Mr. Stodghill's own report showed, hold the carriers responsible for the full amount of their bills, and if the boys do not succeed in collecting them, that is their hard luck. One indignant mother, a poor colored woman who testified at the hearings, bewailed the fact that her son was all the time wearing out shoe-leather and yet never got any money for himself. The training in "salesmanship" which is supposed to be so valuable comes close to begging in many instances. One of the model newsboys who was brought to the hearings ended up his fifteen-minute sales talk lamely with the plea, "Now won't you sign this blank and help me win a prize?"

The champions of the newsboy's right to work at any age claim that practically all our eminent citizens got their start selling papers. Some of them may have, but it seems that a good many criminals got their start the same way. According to Warden Lewis E. Lawes, 69 per cent of the inmates of Sing Sing Prison sold newspapers in their youth. The most damaging attack on the newspaper publishers' exploitation of newsboys has come from within their own ranks. The *Daily News* of New York says bluntly, "When our fellow-publishers talk of freedom of the press they mean freedom to hire children to deliver newspapers before light on winter mornings, because children are cheaper." The *New York Post* "wants to see child labor ruthlessly rooted out of our country's economic and social system." Similar courageous expressions of opinion have come from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the *Milwaukee Journal*, the *Raleigh News-Observer*, and a number of independent small papers. But the straw that must have come near to breaking the publishers' collective back was the editorial pronouncement which appeared in *Editor and Publisher* on June 30, after the hearings. "The fourteen-year limit that is now pro-

posed," this journal said, "against which the circulation departments are crusading, is a sensible and fair proposal. . . . Joining hands with the exploiters of child labor in this country, with demonstrations in favor of a complete let-down of law in regard to child life, is not the way out for the American press."

While the child-labor amendment has had the consistent support of the Scripps-Howard papers, until recently of the Hearst papers, and of a fair number of dailies scattered over the country, a shocking number of papers have changed their views since the agitation began over the newsboys. In 1922 the New York *Herald Tribune* came out strongly for the amendment, but in the spring of 1934, when it was being considered by the state legislature, this influential paper maintained a studied silence. The New York *Sun* was also for the amendment in 1922, but in 1934 it conducted a sharp campaign against it. Altogether some sixty newspapers in the country which had supported the amendment as recently as 1933 had a change of heart in 1934, while a still larger number evaded the issue.

More than a few leading journals have devoted a disproportionate amount of editorial space to attacks on the amendment. The Baltimore *Evening Sun*, between March, 1933, and March, 1934, printed fourteen adverse editorials; the Hartford *Courant*, eighteen in the course of ten months; and the Indianapolis *Star*, fourteen editorial attacks in nine months; yet the amendment was not at the time up for consideration in any of these states. In Massachusetts, where it was brought up and was defeated, the Boston *Transcript* came out with five blasts in two months, and the Springfield *Union* with nine adverse editorials in four months. In Kentucky, where the amendment went down to defeat, Ambassador Bingham's two papers, the Louisville *Courier-Journal* and the *Times*, printed between them forty-nine adverse editorials from October, 1933, to April, 1934, and broadcast unfavorable propaganda over their radio station. The *Courier-Journal* also supplied its newsboys with form letters which were to be distributed to subscribers. "Dear Subscriber," the letter ran, "reformers are attempting to prohibit through the NRA and through a proposed amendment to the Constitution boys under eighteen years of age from being gainfully employed. . . . I want to ask you to write a note on my behalf to General Hugh S. Johnson. . . ."

These form letters are an instance of the misrepresentation and distortion of facts which have crept into news columns all over the country. The impression has been given, either explicitly or implicitly, that the child-labor amendment, if ratified, would automatically deprive every boy under eighteen of the right to work. A reading of the amendment should show the editorial writers that it merely empowers Congress "to limit, regulate, and prohibit the labor of persons under eighteen years of age." No one in his right mind believes that Congress would enact a law prohibiting the employment of persons under eighteen in healthful daytime occupations or making it illegal for parents to require their children to work on the farm or in the kitchen.

The most unfortunate "playing-down" of news favorable to the amendment occurred in connection with two letters which President Roosevelt wrote indorsing it. The first of these, addressed to Mrs. LaRue Brown of the Massachusetts League of Women Voters, read, "Dear Dorothy: Of course I am in favor of the child-labor amendment. . . ."

The letter was released to the Associated Press in Boston on the evening of February 6 and sent out by them only on the New England wires. It was not put on the national hook-up until twenty-four hours later when an inquiry was made by the National Child Labor Committee about the reason for its suppression. The omission was said to be due to bad editorial judgment, nevertheless it may have worked great injury to the cause. The amendment was at the time up for consideration in five states, and the Texas legislators, who voted it down on February 8, might conceivably have been influenced by the President's declaration if they had heard of it.

On November 8 President Roosevelt addressed a second letter of indorsement to Courtney Dinwiddie of the National Child Labor Committee, which was released for publication on November 19. The New York *Herald Tribune* devoted a column to this letter on page 7 of its suburban edition, but dropped it out of the city edition, although the item was not removed from the index. The New York *Times* gave it a short write-up, which was buried in the city edition in the financial section on the page of "unlisted quotations." The *Sun* did not mention it. Only the *World-Telegram*, the *American*, and the *Daily News* gave it adequate display. No mention of the letter appeared under any Associated Press line, although two weeks later, on December 3, the President's indorsement was mentioned in a Washington A. P. dispatch discussing the amendment's chances.

At the present time it appears that the fight in behalf of the newsboy has been lost. At the June hearings the NRA authorities proposed a revision of the publishers' code which would have prohibited the employment of boys under fourteen either as carriers or street sellers (except boys over twelve who already had routes), and would have prohibited carriers being employed before 6 a.m. It was hoped that the Administration would see fit to impose this change, despite the publishers' selfish objections. But nothing was done. Now the Code Authority has proposed for the approval of the publishers substitute provisions which allow boys of twelve to work indiscriminately as carriers, and boys of ten now employed in cities of 50,000 or less to continue as carriers. These rules, furthermore, would allow carriers under sixteen to begin work as early as 5 a.m. These new provisions would seem to constitute the "complete let-down of law in regard to child life" which *Editor and Publisher* deplored in its editorial of June 30. The *Daily News* in commenting says, "Such a system of newspaper child labor is the kind of thing Dickens used to write about—and which Dickens was thought to have largely killed off with his writings."

Still more important than the immediate fate of the newsboy is the fate of the child-labor amendment. In 1933 under the impetus of the New Deal it was revived and ratified by fourteen states in quick succession, but since the newspaper campaign against it got under way in the latter part of 1933, not a single state has ratified it. To date twenty states have voted on it favorably, and it must be indorsed by sixteen more before it will become law. In 1935 it will be considered by twenty-four state legislatures. But public opinion in a number of these states has already been poisoned by newspaper campaigns. Should the amendment be defeated and should the NRA expire in 1935, we may look for a recurrence of child labor in its worst form in sweatshops and mills. The newspapers will then have to take the blame for having killed cock-robin.

Books and Films

All Too Historical

Another Caesar. By Alfred Neumann. Translated from the German by Eden and Cedar Paul. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.

MUCH of this novel sounds like the novels of Captain Mayne Reid, who never let any information escape his reader if he could help it. When Herr Neumann, for instance, has got Louis Napoleon to that point in his career at which Miss Howard, his English mistress, is about to enter it, he lets us have the following facts full in the face:

Howard is one of the great names of England. The head of the Howard family, the Duke of Norfolk, is the first of the dukes and the hereditary Earl Marshal of England; while the Earls of Suffolk, Carlisle, Nottingham, and the Lord Howard of Glossop represent in the peerage the younger line. In this connection we think also of John Howard, the famous eighteenth-century philanthropist and reformer of prisons. Another Howard whose name is famous was Frederick Howard, major of hussars, killed at Waterloo, immortalized by Byron (himself a relative of the Howards) in the third canto of "Childe Harold."

Now it may seem strange, but I was not thinking also of John Howard as I approached that priceless third sentence. If I was thinking about anything it was the name Glossop. Yet I do not remember thinking about even that, though it occurs to me now that the syllables must have sounded amusing. I had long since been rendered incapable either of thought or of amusement by a historical novel which did not know how to arrange its history, so that, for example, on the three-hundredth page before this one I had been compelled to learn that:

The election of Gregory XVI was the great challenge, the declaration of war. This took place on February 2, 1831, after the conclave had lasted sixty-four days. The revolutionary central committee fixed the central Italian rising for February 5. Modena started two days earlier, on February 3 [yes, that would be the 3rd]; thereupon the notorious Duke of Modena, a Carbonaro, but really a Habsburg provocative agent, bombarded the house of the insurgent leader, who was his personal friend, with grape-shot; shot the place to pieces, arrested the wounded Carbonaro chief and his staff, and sent for the executioner. The news started the flames of revolution in Bologna, Parma, Reggio, Ferrara, and Ravenna, on the 5th; the movement spread like wildfire through all the States of the Church, through the Legations, the Delegations, through Romagna and Umbria.

Neumann's novel is as dull as that. Not that those facts are dull in themselves; but Neumann does nothing more with them than I have indicated. They mean nothing to the reader; they are never alluded to again; they were never needed or desired in a work presumably occupied with the story of one man, Louis Napoleon, nephew of the Emperor and one day to be Napoleon III. There are thousands of facts just like them in the book—copied, I suspect, directly from notes which the author once took with the idea that he might give them life if occasion arose; but having more the air of annotations which some assistant professor will compose in future years for a school edition; supposing the novel breathes that long, which of course it will not, since it is already dead.

Even the hero is dead. Louis Napoleon himself was never very much alive, but I can imagine something better being done with him than the thing Neumann has done. Neumann has understood the pathos of his hero's position, and has gone to enough trouble to erect a theory about his character; but he has presented him in a series of episodes and conversations,

many of them prematurely and febrilely climactic, which is never more than a temporal series. The events of Louis's life and the aspects of his strange, weak, stubborn, waxy character do not compose. They remain as stringy and indigestible as Modena and Glossop, and as far apart as history is from fiction. At least bad history, which I take this to be because it is so singularly uninteresting. History is interesting and so is fiction; but Herr Neumann's kind of historical novel is as near to nothing as the human mind can come.

MARK VAN DOREN

Man's Fate on the Pampas

Don Segundo Sombra: Shadows on the Pampas. By Ricardo Güiraldes. Translated by Harriet de Onís. With an Introduction by Waldo Frank. Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.50.

WALDO FRANK says in his introduction to this story from the Argentine that it "occupies a place in Argentinian letters not unrelated to that of 'Huckleberry Finn' in ours." It is the story of an orphan boy, he points out, on his own in a frontier day. Other critics remark that it is more like a Western thriller, since it is a story about cowboy life, and they compare Güiraldes to Jack London. To me it suggests irresistibly "Moby Dick" because of its underlying theme—the pursuit of some enormous mystery, and against that the shaping of human lives in a noble pattern, on a grand, exciting scale.

These different aspects of the book have a common denominator, the thing sensed in it by everybody who reads it. It is unmistakably an American book. It has the feel of space, endless and generous and dangerous; the vigor and nobility of youth; the casual ruthlessness, the horseplay, and the enormous hopefulness of the primitive. Its thread of mysticism—the inarticulate emotions of a man riding alone at the head of thousands of cattle, across hundreds of miles—is also the sense, the excited awe, of explorers, prospectors, whalers, migrants, and pioneers.

Don Segundo Sombra, the hero of the book, rides into the life of the boy who tells the story when that boy is a small-town tough, escaping from two pious and petty "aunts" to go fishing and to hang around saloons. He has become a shrewd little guttersnipe and spends his time clowning maliciously, picking up spare pennies however he can, or brooding uncomfortably by the river. Sly subtleties in public places have made him well aware that there is a shadow on his birth. His aunts are not exactly fond of him. Yet an "uncle" whose ranch he once visited gave him two ponies and a poncho, so that when Don Segundo Sombra, the almost legendary *gaucho*, rides into his town at dusk one day, a complete vision of escape flashes into his head. He departs, with his ponies and his poncho, to lead a brave man's life, the *gaucho* life of Don Segundo Sombra.

What he pursues when he rides out to find Don Segundo Sombra is this: "I stood still and watched the silhouette of horse and rider strangely magnified against the glowing sky. It was as if I had seen a vision, a shade, a something which passes and is more a thought than a living thing; a something that drew me as a deep pool draws down within it the current of a river." So he attaches himself to the *gaucho*, watches him, listens, obeys. And together with him rides from ranch to ranch, from round-up to fair, to make a marvelously colorful and dramatic tale.

Güiraldes says Don Segundo Sombra was a real person. Frank says he met him when he was in the Argentine. But in the story Don Segundo Sombra is also a complete ideal, like our own frontier heroes. He is courageous, silent, modest,

witty, and completely sure of himself. Of course he can rope, saddle, ride, break horses, dance and sing, and tell stories better than anybody else. But he was something more than these things. He was *gaucho* inside as well as out, and therefore, says the boy who took him as a model, "only Don Segundo seemed to escape the fatal law that events play with us and make us dance to every vagrant tune." As he broke green horses, as he dominated broncos, so he dominated life itself. He had "the strength of the pampas." The silent land gave him "something of its greatness and its unconcern." And because he had somehow eliminated fear, "the result was that while the rest of us were heading toward death, he seemed to be on the way back."

Don Segundo Sombra as a complete personification of young Argentine, young America, and manhood making its own fate is probably the triple reason that the book has long since become a classic in the Spanish language, one of those literary mountain peaks at once a widely popular story and a book to be studied in school. Mrs. de Onis has made a superb translation. It is informal, colloquial, and yet true. The decorations by Howard Willard are slight, but they bring out the gay and picaresque plot of the book.

ANITA BRENNER

Stories by Pirandello

Better Think Twice About It and Twelve Other Stories. By Luigi Pirandello. Translated by Arthur and Henrie Mayne. E. P. Dutton and Company. \$3.

THIS is by far the most readable and charming of the many Pirandello volumes that we have had. The translators have made it a point to bring together here stories that catch Pirandello in his fairly rare moods of unmixed joy and good nature, when he forgets, and allows his reader to forget, the cosmic horror of never knowing who one really is, and so permits himself to enjoy to the full the mirth that is inherent in his many ingenious situations. It is a side of Pirandello that is too seldom stressed, and his popularity among English readers should gain immensely from it. Here as usual we find many subjects that have been treated also in dramatic form. The Other Son and the inimitably sportive The Jar (which may be seen occasionally in operatic form at the Metropolitan) figure among the one-act plays. *Better Think Twice About It* appears as "Pensaci, Giacomino" among the better of the three-act comedies (the motif of the aged schoolmaster who marries a girl-wife to get even with the government, which will have to pay her pension). The Call to Duty is none other than "Man, Beast, and Virtue," which Brock Pemberton naughtily slipped over on a Broadway Sunday-night audience as "Say It with Flowers" (in the story it is said with handkerchiefs). What, among the novelties, will make this volume unforgettable will be, I venture, *The Quick and the Dead*. That surely is one of the best short stories ever written. It is perfection itself, and not a word, not an undertone, could by any stretch of the imagination be altered in it (the sea captain who, by an act of God, is left with two wives, sets up two homes in the same town, alternating voyages between them, and has two sets of "legitimate children," one child every five months). The Madonna's Gift, in its pathos, is in the more familiar Pirandellian vein (the saint mistaken for the thief), while *The Captive*, too, has a typical thrust of irony (it is better to be rid of life than to be compelled to live it). Chants the Epistle has its taste of bitter-sweet, with the emphasis this time on the side of the sweet (there is error in translation in the title: in Italian, as in other languages, in nouns made up of a verb plus an object, the verb is in the imperative; "Canta l'epistola" is "Chant the Epistle"). It's Noth-

ing Serious is perhaps not altogether in tone in this collection—a mere banality, a man who marries a halfwit in order to escape matrimony. Novel, instead, will prove a little rosary of charmingly fanciful animal stories—*The King Set Free*, *The Crow of Mizzaro*, *Black Horses*. The translators of this collection are finding some delicious bits in the fourteen volumes of the "Tales for a Whole Year." One looks forward with anticipation to others.

ARTHUR LIVINGSTON

A Poet Turns Novelist

The Transients. By Mark Van Doren. William Morrow and Company. \$2.50.

HAVING read many poems by Mark Van Doren, I felt that he was more interested in what grass does, how animals move, how wind blows than in what people do, what people feel. There are no people in his poems; if there are it is mainly for gardening or looking at non-human things. There is a great intimacy with the inanimate, the subhuman, the small, the far. There is always the watching eye that looks and looks until the watcher becomes the watched; the profound absorption in appearances that becomes identification, a blood knowledge as incommunicable as sleep. There is silence and fear and the burden of time flying. The eyes, the nerves, and the pulse are merged in something beyond the seen that is timeless, that simply is. This is rest from the messy incompleteness of the brain's and the heart's futile strivings, which are not so much fled from as coldly ignored.

But a novel, I thought, must be about people, unless it is about machinery, which this one surely won't be. It will be set in village or country, mostly outdoors. Nature will be more important than human nature. There will be detail of movement and pattern of activity but a certain blankness of final impression. It will have the quality of loneliness beneath the sky and of silence. I was fascinated by my idea of what the novel would be like, and I continued to be fascinated by what it turned out to be. It was what I had thought, but a great deal more.

There are four main characters, two mortals and two immortal beings from another world, transiently clothed with humanity. There are three episodes, the love of each mortal for an immortal, the love of the two immortals for each other. They are here for a short time only. They may remain and become human or return to their former state, of which they remember only that it is pure being, bodiless and perfect, knowledge and happiness instantaneous and eternal, needing no organs and no expression. The woman wants to stay, but the man, though he loves her, loves more the impersonal serene existence, wise, painless, and beautiful. He has observed that human life consists mainly of hurting and being hurt. He escapes from her, and during this escape each meets and is loved by a mortal. But later she finds him again and seeks to bind him to earth.

Although the episodes interlock, each has a special quality and completeness. The first, the love of the girl Madge for the strange creature John Bole, who is arrested for hitchhiking and lodged in the one-room jail attached to her father's house, seems to me extremely beautiful. Madge, a girl of potential character, a slangy little thing, interested in parties and boy friends, becomes through her love for Bole an authentically tragic figure. And this is done realistically and simply, for her English grows no better while her spirit is tempered and purified by her suffering. She loves Bole and follows him, knowing that he must shortly leave her.

The love of Stephen for Margaret, the woman immortal, is in another key, for Stephen is a spoiled child of fortune,

though a charming one. He can command a perfect setting for his idyl, and tries to imprison her in it. He loves her with wonder and humility, yet his love has not the poignancy of Madge's. He suffers but he will recover. Margaret vanishes and he does not find her again, but he does not have to see her walk away with his rival as Madge does her lover. For Margaret, after leaving him, finds Bole on the road with Madge and quietly takes him away. Her victory, however, is only over Madge. She must now conquer Bole for herself, wean him from his adoration of an imagined principle of life to actual living. Her struggle to do this constitutes the last episode.

The language and the setting are simple. The other-worldliness is all in the feelings and behind the feelings of the beings involved. There is homeliness in the speech and air of the first episode. This is New England; these people are Yankees, Madge, her father and mother. They talk of the strangeness of Bole as he might be talked of in any village kitchen. The author's long habit of looking has flowered in one of the most pictorial of novels. It is a series of scenes that remain in the memory, and these scenes have the emphasis on movement that one finds in the poems, greatly heightened in meaning. In the poignant scenes of Madge's two visits to Bole in the jail, one remembers, as though one tasted their salt, her tears on his cheek. When he eats a farewell breakfast with her and her mother, her resolute turning away of her face as she serves him, the prodigiously achieved flippancy of her speech produce an effect of intolerable tension, which is later released when she slips through a back window to join him. Many such instances might be cited. The two women, one mortal, one wishing to be, have much simplicity and womanliness in common, and John, the immortal, is a good deal like many mortal men. He loves women well, but fundamentally he loves something else better, though he doesn't quite know what it is; kind, charming, and ruthless, he will take all that they have to give him on the way there, enriching them with a pain that is almost understanding, while himself shrinking from giving or receiving pain. The existence he longs for is a dissolution in still air, a spirit of peace and vacancy in the quiet of country afternoons, on sunny hillsides, something that the watching eye and receptive heart will feel as perfection, and Margaret must make the decision to follow him there or not.

CLARA GRUENING STILLMAN

A Psychogenic Goodness

Heaven's My Destination. By Thornton Wilder. Harper and Brothers. \$2.50.

PERHAPS the great bulk of the immediate readers of this romance will be among the subscribers to the Book-of-the-Month Club, of which it is the January selection. There is a flier from the *News* of that club, written by Henry Seidel Canby, to which it is therefore pertinent to refer. Dr. Canby compares "Heaven's My Destination" with "Don Quixote," "Pilgrim's Progress," Sinclair Lewis, Ruth Draper, and an unwritten book by Voltaire. But it is "Don Quixote" without the tolerance and gaiety, "Pilgrim's Progress" without Bunyan's passion or allegory; it is the Sinclair Lewis of "Free Air" not "Arrowsmith"; it is Ruth Draper without the irony or taste, Voltaire with neither wit nor intellectual rage. Dr. Canby teaches us that when applied with a ladle rather than a juster measure comparisons are indeed odious. For the rest, there are matters more naturally within the book itself which may be made to characterize it more firmly, if on another level, than Dr. Canby's encomiums.

Superficially, as every reviewer has noted at length, Mr.

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Wilder has purged his style and altered his subject; there is neither verbal sophistication nor ritual sonority of theme; there is, rather, a lively, entertaining novel of picaresque incident presenting the twenty-fourth year of the life of George Brush in plain but highly literate idiom. Brush is a Middle Westerner traveling in schoolbooks; he is also a primitive American Christian and a disciple of Gandhi. The combination of occupation and scene with a radically dissociated personal point of view puts him in constant conflict with everyone he meets. To the ordinary American, either pretentiously hard-boiled or inarticulately simple, with whom he mostly deals, he seems either a pig-headed religious freak with no sense of reality or a high-minded prig with a passion for butting into other people's business. Mr. Wilder has chosen, quite rightly for certainty of immediate effect and interest, to represent his theme in terms of humorous incident. Thus we see Brush made the victim of practical jokes, arrested for misunderstandings, and married, because of a principle, to a woman he does not love. The sense of reality is secured by showing, with the heightening power of humor, the reaction of "normal" people to a personality they take to be absurd. The clinching irony lies in the author's objective rendering of the different incidents; by the objectivity the "normal" people gain a new proportion in the absorbed light of their victim's personality. There are few authors with both enough skill and enough purpose to make such comment either possible or relevant. But even the reader who fails to apprehend either the purpose or the skill can yet, if he merely lets himself go, enjoy the immediate value of the achieved effect—which represents, I suppose, a triumph of craft.

Fundamentally, in the important aspects of his work, Mr. Wilder has not altered much; he has merely matured his technique, dropped meretricious ballast, and shifted his angle of vision. That his substance remains constant is perhaps indicated by the quotation from his own "The Woman of Andros" on the title page: "Of all the forms of genius, goodness has the longest awkward age." Certainly it is with the representation of goodness, conceived in terms of the Christian insight and posed in conflict with the world, that Mr. Wilder has always been concerned. Goodness, not intelligence (as with James), not passion (as with Balzac), not the rational life (as with Mann) is the predominating theme. It is goodness, too, taken not merely as a quality or a resource but as the final vocation of life, and it is the special goodness of the Christian insight; which is to say that, as with the great novelists, the theme is made omnivorous and inclusive.

Every artist may be granted his theme with the proviso that he represent it to the limits called for. In Mr. Wilder's case there are two difficulties which interfere with complete initial assent. There is the difficulty of Christianity and there is the difficulty of the limit of the form of Mr. Wilder's imagination. Christianity is no longer, in the phrase of Ramón Fernandez, quite to our spiritual baking—not in the Catholicism of T. S. Eliot, in the Tomists, or in Mr. Wilder's humaner form. As a fundamental, governing assumption in the affairs of our own day it is hard to swallow; so that when George Brush is presented as a heresy—an exaggerated instance—of Christian goodness, neither the heresy nor the implied corrective in the off-stage figure of Father Pasziewski (who, hearing of Brush and his goodness, prays for him on Fridays) can be easily digested as matters of dramatic belief. Thus, too, some of Brush's opponents, particularly the unregenerate Harvard intellectual, seem set up like ninepins solely for the purpose of being knocked over. The reader has, for more than immediate satisfaction, to perform an operation which he is not equipped for: he has to provide the substance of the spiritual reality of which Mr. Wilder supplies only the outward sign. However successful superficially, which is a great deal, good-

ness which is merely imputed has not enough authority to substantiate a theme.

It requires, for natural unbelievers, either the persuasion of communicated passion in the phrase or deliberate representation. Dostoevski's character Alyosha—with whom Dr. Canby might profitably have compared George Brush—gains the complete assent of the reader as to his profound Christian goodness because he is so thoroughly represented both in conflict and alone. Dostoevski employed an imaginative form of large enough scope to require complete representation; Mr. Wilder does not, employing rather the mode of the rigidly selected item, the hint, the indication, the light touch. If I may draw an analogue from the art of painting, Mr. Wilder uses the mode of outline and inner markings where Dostoevski uses the mode of total visual effect. So far as literature is concerned, the difference between the two modes is this: where Dostoevski depends the least on an assumed fundamental agreement with his readers, exactly at that point Mr. Wilder depends the most. Since with Mr. Wilder the agreement does not widely exist, the reality, not of the theme, but of his special instance of it, seems at a critical point without the authority of art, and merely psychogenic, a matter of intention. Thus Mr. Wilder achieves a success which is secondary and provisional when on every other ground it ought to have been primary and certain.

R. P. BLACKMUR

Case History

We Are Betrayed. By Vardis Fisher. Doubleday, Doran and Company. \$2.50.

THIS is by far the most interesting volume in Vardis Fisher's tetralogy, of which two volumes, "In Tragic Life" and "Passions Spin the Plot," have already appeared. The hero, Vridar, is grown now, married to a girl from his own Antelope Hill country. This section of a morbidly fascinating case history is concerned with the young man's college years, with his brief experience in a training camp during the World War, and with his violent and varied post-war disillusionments. "We Are Betrayed" is better written and more important in subject matter than the earlier volumes largely because the main, and almost only, character is now adult. He is no longer dwelling on the petty though terrible sex experiences of his early youth, but is examining himself as an adult and as he reflects the lives of others. This volume, therefore, gives the first hint of universality of theme. It remains, nevertheless, the study of a morbidly sensitive, frightfully egocentric personality. Through his intense desire to be utterly honest with himself and with all his friends and associates Vridar succeeds, in his passionate self-absorption, in treating those he loves more cruelly than might the most villainous of men. This book is an account of how the man and the artist together kill the woman loved.

One gets no clear character portrayals in such a book as this—actually no one exists except Vridar. Nor is this volume, any more than the others, truly a novel. Every sensation of the author has been set down, and since his is so violent and absorbed a mind—a mind certainly a little mad—they are all set down with great intensity. We see Nelo, his sweetheart and wife, his college professors, his family, his soldier companions, his friends, his intellectual mistress, through his eyes. One suspects that Nelo might have told a very different story about herself. One realizes that many of these people must have seen in Vridar the fool, the madman, the destroying, self-centered person he obviously was. The author, to give him full credit, is not unaware that he is showing us a character

by no means so noble as this suffering hero with the tremendous passions obviously believes himself to be. No writer could put Vridar down on paper and not see his faults. But in this case the novelist—or biographer—is more concerned with writing a completely “honest” account of a life than with the effect his protagonist produces on the reader.

There is more invention in this volume than in the earlier ones. Vridar, loving Neloia with a Lawrencian blindness, and choosing deliberately to leave her for the impossible Athene, symbol of his mind and its needs, is drawn in good measure from life. But one doubts whether he drove Neloia to suicide in quite the manner he describes. These last chapters are exciting, well constructed. The only difficulty is that one has been borne through the book on great waves of agony and as a result the final climax hardly surpasses the many preceding ones.

We leave the hero reading Marx (“Except for the faint light of Marx, I’ve found nothing yet in books to sustain me”), and perhaps some humility, some realization of himself as one of many, will result. So far, he has been the complete romanticist, Byronian in his frenzies, the modern Faust fully equipped with a Freudian psychology.

Mr. Fisher has provided us with absorbing reading, particularly as he has analyzed his hero’s most intimate acts and thoughts, but he has so far not succeeded in creating literature. He writes with power, but the difficulty is that power forever turned on at full force loses some of its effectiveness. There is little variety in mood, little selection, little change of tone or tempo throughout the book. If Mr. Fisher could learn restraint in the use of the power he obviously possesses, if he could introduce more variety into his tone, if he could give to a wider range of characters as much reality as he gives to Vridar, he would be a novelist to reckon with.

EDA LOU WALTON

Pass the Salt

Lightship. By Archie Binns. Reynal and Hitchcock. \$2.50.

Lost Horizon. By James Hilton. William Morrow and Company. \$2.50.

Mary Peters. By Mary Ellen Chase. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

February Hill. By Victoria Lincoln. Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.50.

Shipmates. By Isabel Carter. William R. Scott. \$2.50.

EVERY year at the holiday season the critical brothers fall victim to an epidemic of list-making. Probably every critic on every daily and every weekly in the city of New York, and doubtless elsewhere, composes his or her list of “My Favorite Books,” “Best Books of the Year,” “Books to Give Your Friends for Christmas.” The value of this annual game is, I think, greatly overrated. Lists can be made which are serious, disinterested estimates of a year’s literary activity, but too frequently they become mere exhibitionistic frolics in which the critic has all the pleasure of airing his prejudices with none of the pain of defending them. This year, early in the game, *The Nation* published its own list, which was, I truly believe, compiled in the sober spirit I mention above. Whatever its spirit, it evoked what amounted to a howl of protest from the daily papers. Critics were vociferously hurt to find that *The Nation* (and for that matter, the *New Republic*) had failed to include their favorite novels. One commentator, dashing into the fray with her own list, announced that *The Nation*’s selections in fiction would spoil anybody’s Christmas dinner, to which *The Nation* can only reply that its selections were not intended to be taken as an *apéritif*.

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However, in the midst of all this excitement *The Nation* found on its shelves five novels of the 1934 season, four of them critics' "favorites," all of them in or near the best-seller class, and all still unreviewed. These were the five: "Lightship," "Lost Horizon," "Mary Peters," "February Hill," and "Shipmates." In exhuming them now, when most of them are already on their way to oblivion, *The Nation* is not writing a codicil to its list. This review is really nothing more than an explanatory footnote.

These five neglected novels have very little in common. Three are sea stories, one a tale of adventure, one a bawdy romance. There are but two qualities they share, and the first is a splendid, sickening mediocrity. They are not bad books; they are, for the most part, competently written. They are the work of patient craftsmen who have learned how to write a smooth, grammatical sentence, how to manipulate a conventional plot, how to make a character look vaguely like a human being.

James Hilton, for example has sat at the feet of more masters than I can name, and as far as I can judge from "Lost Horizon," he will never be more than an obedient disciple. From Somerset Maugham and Lord Dunsany he has taken the old stunt that involves two former Oxford men who meet in a club in a distant spot and fall to discussing the adventures of a mutual friend. When the strange story ends, there you are, back in the security of the British club, and you wonder: was it real, or was it but a winter's tale told near a comfortable fireside? For the rest of his plot Mr. Hilton must have turned to Sax Rohmer, for throughout the novel you have the uneasy feeling that at any moment, out from behind a tapestry in the luxurious Tibetan monastery, will step your old acquaintance, Dr. Fu Manchu. In the same fashion, Mr. Binns, Miss Chase, and Miss Carter, authors of the sea stories, have all come to realize that a disaster at sea can give a reader—or a movie-goer—a sound emotional wallop, and someone has unquestionably told Miss Lincoln, progenitrix of "February Hill," that you can always get a laugh out of a dirty joke.

But beyond these few simple, traditional devices, the authors of the five novels have learned and felt little. In "February Hill" Victoria Lincoln has created two characters, a wicked old woman and a wicked young child, who, while not deeply realized, are at least memorable. Of the other characters in the novels this cannot be said; two weeks after the books have been put aside their names will be forgotten. Of Mary Peters and her mother, Sarah, one knows nothing but the constantly iterated fact that they are "brave women." The heroine of "Shipmates" has not much more than a continual giggle to distinguish her from the rest of the human race. It is the same with "Lost Horizon" and "Lightship." The essential mediocrity of all the books reveals itself most strongly in their presentation of character. The situations are there, but the people, weakly sketched, are not large enough to fill them.

In a second respect are the novels alike, and it is this common quality which probably accounts for their popularity. They are all escape novels. Whether the action takes place on a nineteenth-century vessel or a modern lightship anchored off Puget Sound, whether in lonely Tibet or strike-ridden Fall River, it is never at any time concerned with problems which are to contemporary human beings real and pressing. The action of all seems to take place in some kind of vacuum where satire is never sharp and pain is suffused with a pleasurable melancholy. If one wishes to be melodramatic one can call them anodyne, narcotic, but such epithets give them a dignity and a power that they do not in themselves possess. They are, in essence, pure, old-fashioned treacle, and if they were taken as pre-Christmas nourishment, I hope they were accompanied by a side-dish of bitter aloes and Attic salt.

MARY MCCARTHY

Shorter Notices

Memory of Love. By Bessie Breuer. Simon and Schuster. \$2.

Here is an extremely interesting first novel. A number of well-known writers have, as usual, written extravagant blurbs for it, and it will probably suffer from being overpraised. It is the story of a love affair between a virile but weak man and a strong, confused girl, a love affair that begins in simple lust and ends in high, almost Platonic passion. The character of the man is badly conceived, so much so that he seems more a woman's dream of a forceful male than a living member of the masculine sex. The writing is often strained and perfervid. Yet, for all its faults, Miss Breuer has managed to condense into her short book such a terrific sense of the agonizing, yearning power of half-fulfilled love that it is more affecting than a dozen well-executed novels. Miss Breuer's intensity of feeling is real, and if she will rid herself of a certain fake intensity of style, her next novel will lack the blurry quality that defaces "Memory of Love."

Via Mala. By John Knittel. Frederick A. Stokes Company. \$2.50.

This vast and sluggish novel of 667 pages deals with life and crime in a Swiss Alpine canton. Its publishers boast that it has already gone through several editions abroad, though how this was accomplished is a problem more fascinating than the central problem of the novel. Mr. Knittel's book occupies itself with the ancient but perhaps burning question: Is murder ever justifiable? His villain and central character, Jonas Jauretz, is a drunken owner of a sawmill, who abuses his family in a violent but unconvincing fashion. His maltreated relatives finally take matters into their own hands and murder him. The rest of the novel is devoted to the state of their consciences after the fearful event. The characters whom Mr. Knittel manipulates through this drama of primitive passion are unreal in conception, jerky in movement. The few chunks of modern political philosophy which are tossed at random into the book are altogether infantile, and the prose reads like a bad literal translation of a foreign novel. One may commend Mr. Knittel only for his energy in putting together such a tremendous opus.

Pitcairn's Island. By Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall. Little, Brown and Company. \$2.50.

The Tale of a Shipwreck. By James Norman Hall. Houghton, Mifflin Company. \$2.50.

"Pitcairn's Island" completes the trilogy of high adventure of which "Mutiny on the Bounty" and "Men Against the Sea" were the first two volumes. Here we are told what happened to Fletcher Christian and his mutineers after they left Tahiti for the second time, to be seen no more by their former associates. Only one survived to tell the story of how they landed on a little paradise, where food and water was abundant, where the climate never harassed them, where there were no dangerous beasts, where the scenery was all that could have been asked for. And as did their Biblical ancestors before them, they lost their Eden because of the greed and anger in their own hearts. Like the best romances, that is, "Pitcairn's Island" has a moral. The story of the Bounty began in violence, and with violence it came to its end. For with the death of Christian and Young, it may be said to have ended, although their children survived to be discovered by Europeans and to be betrayed by Christian missionaries, the familiar fate of the South Sea islands. But this pathetic ending to the tale was not told until Mr. Hall wrote his "Tale of a Shipwreck." He went to Pitcairn's Island to see for himself what was left of the little society which Christian had founded. He, too, was

shipwrecked on the way back and had to make a portion of his passage in a small boat, just as Bligh had done. This is a fitting epilogue to as grand a tale of sea romance as we have had in a long time. Whether it is "true" or not, in the sense of whether or not Mr. Nordhoff and Mr. Hall have correctly interpreted the facts that have come down to us about the Bounty mutiny and its consequences, matters less than that their account is spirited, direct, passionate, and always interesting. It has the truth of art; the reader could not ask for more.

Background for Venus. By James Laver. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

This new novel by the author of "Nymph Errant" is mildly entertaining and quite unimportant. The fashionable art world of London is its background; its hero is a gifted young artist who sells himself out to the fleshpots and thereby destroys himself. Its plot is intricate enough for any taste, and it plays melodrama against a rather crude satire in the accepted modern fashion. Unfortunately, Mr. Laver's wit is not sufficiently sharp nor his emotions sufficiently profound to lift a mediocre tale into high comedy or into tragedy. Yet the novel is so unassuming that one cannot be angry with it for its shallowness. One can only think, a shade regretfully, of what Evelyn Waugh would have done with the plot.

Films

Blood and Glory

IT would undoubtedly surprise the founders of this commonwealth very much to hear their descendants loudly applauding two recent Hollywood pictures which are nothing more or less than testimonials to the glory of British domination. Yet this is the curious spectacle that may be witnessed this week at two New York theaters not hitherto open to the insinuation of Anglophilia. "Clive of India" at the Rivoli celebrates the founding in the eighteenth century of that empire which is being so stoutly defended today in "Lives of a Bengal Lancer" at the Paramount. It is not easy to offer an explanation for this sudden devotion to the cause of British imperialism on the part of Hollywood producers. There is of course the possibility that the warnings which Mr. Hearst used to issue on the subject of British propaganda in this country were not properly heeded. But in the absence of any evidence of this sort one must look elsewhere for an explanation. Perhaps one need look no farther than the mind of the average American motion-picture audience, to which one empire is probably the same as any other. It is probable, in other words, that nothing more portentous lies behind these pictures than the inveterate human attraction for destruction, carnage, torture, and bloodshed. If the story of British rule in India has so suddenly become a popular film subject, it may only be because it is so rich in opportunities for playing on the more ferocious modes of heroic conduct. For the heroic note, which reappeared last season with such biographical pictures as "Catherine the Great" and "Viva Villa," has apparently come to stay: the current Broadway screen is gory with the blood of heroes of all nationalities. Nor is it altogether surprising that, in a period of tension like the present, screen audiences should like to relieve their feelings now and then by a few orgies of blood and glory.

At the same time not all spectators will be so easily able to suspend their intelligences before such spectacles; and for these people everything in the two films just mentioned is likely to be vitiated by the essential phoniness of their assumptions. For them Lord Clive will appear less the romantic hero

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that Hollywood makes him out to be and more the ruthless opportunist, forger, and taker of bribes that he actually was. The little band of intrepid British warriors in the other picture will hardly be distinguishable from any band of marauders in an alien country. And these disturbing reflections will seriously hamper any response of a purely emotional or dramatic order. It will be difficult to feel properly sympathetic toward Lady Clive (Loretta Young) when her husband (Ronald Colman) is off fighting for his "honor," to admire the rigorous patriotism of the Lancer colonel who makes his son suffer the penalty of breaking discipline, or to work up the necessary resentment against the Indian prince who tortures the two young officers (Gary Cooper and Franchot Tone) in the same picture. "Lives of a Bengal Lancer" is the better film only in the sense that in covering more ground it provides a more considerable distraction for the eye. An expensive display of Hollywood incoherence, it is at least colorful, noisy, and varied in movement. So much cannot be said for "Clive of India," which is a niggardly production in every respect. The Indian background is skimmed for the sake of interminable marital dialogues in a London drawing-room. The horrors of the Black Hole of Calcutta are not even indicated, and the attack of the battle elephants at Plassey is a grave disappointment.

Between these two films and the film that has just opened at the Cameo there is an almost absolute difference. "Chapayev" is also a hymn to action; its hero is a warrior who thinks nothing of risking his life for a cause. But the action is so indissolubly related to a clearly defined theme that both the emotions and the intelligence of the spectator are engaged from beginning to end. The action, in a word, has some meaning for the mind. This is not to suggest that like so many recent Soviet productions "Chapayev" is another sermon on the Lenin mausoleum. Its meaning is projected entirely in terms of individual character. Chapayev, who was one of the best-known leaders of the red forces during the civil war in 1917, is presented "in the round"—undoubtedly the most successful achievement in this kind of characterization that the Soviet studios have yet managed. As an impetuous and strong-willed hero he exercises all the seduction that this type of individual always exercises in history and in the theater. He is even endowed with a generous overflow of rich peasant humor. But he is also made to illustrate the consequences of this sort of temperament when it is not subordinated to some outside authority. Like all true tragic heroes, Chapayev suffers from an excess of self-confidence; and he comes to disaster when he refuses to heed the orders of the commissar from Moscow—the remote and abstract symbol of authority in the film.

It is not possible to enumerate all the things in this picture which contribute to making it one of the most magnificent that have ever come to us from the Soviet Union. The performance of Babochkin in the title role should become a classic model of what acting on the screen can be; and the same might be said for most of the other players in the film. As for the handling of the war scenes—the "psychological attack" of the White Guards in particular—it illustrates to what extent successful pictorial design on the screen depends on sharpness of thematic intention. The vigorous aesthetic pattern in the attack scene, for example, is based exactly on the collision of psychological forces in the story. In the Soviet Union the picture has taken on the importance of a political event—and for obvious reasons. But for the rest of the world it may serve to demonstrate how every quality of an artistic work derives from its possession of a clearly recognizable and intelligible theme.

WILLIAM TROY

[The dramatic column is unavoidably omitted from this issue because of the illness of Joseph Wood Krutch. It will appear next week as usual.]